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**GRAMMATICAL TREATISE**  
ON  
**THE LANGUAGE**  
OF  
**WILLIAM LANGLAND**

**PRECEDED**  
**BY A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND HIS POEM**  
**PIERS THE PLOWMAN.**

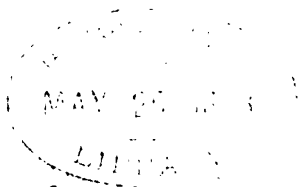
**Inaugural-Dissertation**  
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bei  
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Opponenten:  
Herm. Sieglerschmidt, cand. phil.  
Wilh. Diderich, cand. phil.  
Heinr. Schüth, cand. phil.

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*Lane fund.*

**TO**  
**PROFESSOR NIC. DELIUS**

**THIS TREATISE**

**IS**

**MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED**

**BY**

**THE AUTHOR.**





## PREFACE.

---

William Langland, the author of the poem called "The Vision of Piers the Plowman," belongs to those poets who are nearly forgotten. His work, so very popular at the time of its appearance, is but little read nowadays; which is the more surprising, as this first original production of English Literature is invaluable as a specimen of that transitory period of the English Language. Considering Chaucer the father of English Literature, we ought not to forget that he himself did not despise to imitate our poet. Reading Chaucer's "Sompnoures Tale", we are forcibly reminded of Langland's mendicants and friars, his monks and monasteries. The difficulties and obscurities of the language are fully balanced by the vigour and beauty of the poet's ideas, which not seldom reach to sublimity of conception. Besides, Langland is master of a natural satirical vein, for which he should be justly ranked amongst the first satirists.

The object of the following treatise is to give an insight into Langland's language from a *grammatical* point of view, and to show its relation to the Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French. Through the kindness of Professor Nic. Delius I have had the free use of Skeat's edition of Piers the Plowman, in the three Texts, a full description of which I have given in my Introduction. I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude, and of giving him my heartiest thanks.

E. B.

## INTRODUCTION.

The Norman conquest, important for the political as well as for the moral development of the English people, took place in the memorable year 1066. — To understand the influence which this great event exercised over the English Language, we must consider the state in which it was at that time.

The Anglo-Saxon, as a written language, existed no longer; Latin had completely supplanted it. The clergy, no longer able to enjoy the old Anglo-Saxon beauties in Verse and Prose, had soon laid aside Caedmon and its Paraphrase. When they spoke to their flocks, they availed themselves of the respective dialects of their Shires, the pure Anglo-Saxon tongue with its strict grammatical forms being already strange to the ear of the people. According to the tendency of all the languages of the Germanic stock, the Anglo-Saxon gradually lost its inflections, and the full sounding vowels. The language split into different dialects, all uniform in their inclination to throw off the grammatical inflections. So the Anglo-Saxon became restricted to the lower classes, for want of a literature to support it. The nobility adopted the French language, then flourishing in literature; French became the language of the court; French minstrels sang their lays in hall and castle. We need only recall to mind Edward the Confessor, who came to the throne in 1042; he had been brought up amongst his relations at the Norman Court; in fact, he was much more a Frenchman than an Englishman.

There is little doubt that he drew over a great number of the clergy and nobility, whom he appointed to offices in England.

Under these circumstances the Invasion of the Normans took place, which introduced with the Norman government an exclusively French administration. Although the foreign element was thus spreading, the Anglo-Saxon still lingered in the lower and unlearned classes. The amalgamation of the two languages was reserved to later times. A proof of this is the struggle of the Anglo-Saxon to revive itself by literary means, in the so-called Semi-Saxon. Thus we find the works of Layamon and Ormin, the first a translation of Wace's Brut, written about 1160; the second, a metrical paraphrase of Scripture, of a rather later date; both of which show that the language was still existing, though in a state of decay. The only possible and reasonable manner of reviving the language was through the new element. The coming time was one of mutual action and reaction. The Norman Conquest though not the real internal cause, precipitated and completed the metamorphosis in which the Anglo-Saxon language was implicated; besides, it enriched the language with a great number of words. Naturally enough, it was only in course of time that we find an approximation of the two nations, as well as of the nobility. This state was promulgated by the anti-gallican feeling which arose from the continual wars with France, and finally by the total separation of England from Normandy. A more flourishing period ensued; the dawn of the English Language broke. Schools were founded all over the country; the seminaries at Oxford and Cambridge were elevated to universities; philosophical, especially metaphysical, studies soon became favoured; Latin began to reassert its former power; historical and ecclesiastical productions appeared in great number. — But this vast development of intelligence amongst the people stimu-

ated them to make some resistance against the oppressions of the clergy and nobility, who, by the immense influence and power they possessed, had been led to unheard-of abuses and extravagances. Their vices were notorious; immorality and debauchery had corrupted them to the very core. Satirical songs, directed against the Church of Rome, mostly ascribed to Walter Mapes, were welcomed with applause, and were well calculated to increase the fermentation.

It was in these stirring times that William Langland appeared.

## WILLIAM LANGLAND.

There is some obscurity regarding our poet's name. The best and most trustworthy evidence that we have for supposing his Christian name to be *William*, is that in nearly all the MSS. he is so designated; although in Crowley's edition, A. D. 1550, we meet with an interesting address to the Reader, in which the editor calls our poet: *Robertelangelande, a Shropshire man, borne in Cleybirie aboute VIII myles from Malverne hilles*. — He is also named *Robertus Langelande* by Bale<sup>1</sup>). David Buchanan too, calls him *Robertus Langland*. — But as these testimonies are proved to be erroneous in other statements also, viz. in Bale's taking it for granted that he was a monk, when we have several evidences to convince us of the contrary; further, in Buchanan's claiming him as a Scotchman, and in Crowley's uncertainty as to dates and distances; we prefer to adopt the universally received belief that our author's Christian

1) Balei Script. Illustr. maioris Britanniae Cent. VI pag. 474 Basileae apud Oporinum 1559.

name was *William*, — the more so, as he always alludes to himself as “Wille” in his poems:

*And made wille to wepe* V, 62<sup>1)</sup> *here is wille wolde ywyte* VIII, 124 *My name is longe wille* XV, 148.

That his surname was *Langland* is ascertained by the following passage from the Dublin MS. — *Memorandum quod Stay de Rokayle, pater Willielmi de Langland, qui Stacius fuit generosus et morabatur in Schiptone under Whicwode, tenens domini le Spenser in comitatu Oxon., qui praedictus Willielmus fecit librum qui vocatur Perys Ploughman.* — In two MSS. of Text C however, Digby 171 and Lord Ilchester’s MS., we find: *Explicit visio Wilielmi W. de Petro le Plowman.* — Yet upon the whole, the balance of evidence inclines in favour of: *William Langland* — and as such has been generally received.

The probable place of his birth was Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire, which is not far from the “Shipton-under-Wychwood,” mentioned by Bale.

As we know that he wrote the B Text of Dowel, when he was 45 years old, — for there the poet speaks of himself as having:

*“folwed fourty wynter and a fyfte more;”*

XI, 46; and further says:

*“I have folwed þe in feithe þis fyve and fourty wyntre”*

XII, 3. —

we can state 1332 as the date of his birth.

Concerning his life, we must be satisfied with what we can glean from his writings. Many an allusion enables us to trace his history.

He was the son of a free man or franklin, VI, 56. which means that he was born in lawful wedlock. — That part of the poem which gives us most information about his

1) Citations without further designation are taken from the B Text. The first number denotes the Passus, the second the Verse, pr. is used as an abbreviation for “the prologue.”

life is Passus VI Text C, some passages of which we will cite here: 35—

*Whanne ich 3ong was, quath ich meny 3er hennes,  
My fader and my frendes founden<sup>1)</sup> me to scole,  
Tyl ich wiste wyterliche<sup>2)</sup> what holy writ menede,  
And what is best for þe body as þe bok telleþ,  
And sykerest<sup>3)</sup> for þe soule by so ich wolle continue.  
And 3ut fond ich nevere in faith sytthen<sup>4)</sup> my frendes  
deyden,*

*Lyf þat me lyked bote in þes longe clothes.  
Yf ich by laboure sholde lyve and lyfode<sup>5)</sup> deserven  
That labour þat ich lerned best þer-with lyve ich sholde:  
'In eadem vocatione in qua vocati estis, manete'  
And ich lyve in londone and on londone bothe,  
The lomes<sup>6)</sup> þat ich laboure with and lyfode deserve  
Ys 'pater-noster' and my prymer 'placebo' and 'dirige',  
And my sauter som tyme and my sevene psalmes.  
Thus ich synge for hure<sup>7)</sup> soules of suche as me helpen,  
And þo þat fynden me my fode vouchen saf, ich trowe,  
To be welcome whanne ich come oþer-whyle in a monthe,  
Now with him and now with hure<sup>8)</sup> and þusgate ich begge  
Withoute bagge oþer botel bote<sup>9)</sup> my wombe one*

—52.)

From this we see our poet first as a boy at school, probably in the primitive Malvern monastery, brought up and educated in the Holy Scripture; with earnest will he sought his soul's peace, and found it nowhere but in the "*longe clothes*," (not the monastic badge, but the "*longe clothes*" of a secular priest). He had probably taken minor orders, which did not enforce celibacy. When he has left the cloister, we find him living in London in Cornhill with his wyfe Kytte:

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1) sent.    2) clearly.    3) best.    4) since.    5) live-  
lihood.    6) tools.    7) their.    8) her.    9) but.

*"Thus ich awaked, god wote, whanne ich wonede on cornehulle.  
Kytte and ich in a cote cloped as a lollere."*

VI, 1, 2 (C Text)

He was clothed as a "lollere" (lollard), but he says in the same Passus that he was not liked by the lollards and hermits, amongst whom he lived, (for many of them, instead of preaching moral life and doing good to the people, incited them to mischief and disorder) because he wrote against them what his conscience taught him. In Passus XXI, 473 (C Text) Langland alludes to his wife and daughter:

*"ich kallyd kytte my wyf and kalote my doughter."*

From the above Passus VI. (C Text) we also learn what kind of life he led; how at times he wandred from house to house, preaching and singing "Placebo" and "Dirige", "Psalms" and "Psalters", to those who afforded him food and shelter; for bare he was of the riches of this world; like the disciples of old he carried neither scrip nor purse. There are several allusions to his extreme poverty.

He possessed some knowledge of Latin and French, and had evidently studied the Law. The many Latin quotations, mostly taken from the Bible, with which his poem is interspersed, prove the first. That he knew French, follows from Passus XV, 369 (B Text). From the passages:

*"West-mynster lawe, ich wot wel". XI, 239 (C Text).*

and: *"A chartre is chalengeable byfor a chief justice,*

*It false latyne be in þe lettre þe lawe it impugneth"*

XI, 296 (B Text)

we see clearly that he was well acquainted with the intricacies of Law.

In his different poems, Langland makes a great many allusions to places, most of which he had probably visited in his wanderings.

At the very commencement of *Piers the Plowman* we find him, weary and wellnigh exhausted, laying himself down to rest on his own native *Malverne hilles* prs (B Text). It is



here that he dreams, and sees his Visions. In Passus VII we again meet him on these hills. In V. (B) he mentions the Winchester and Weyhill fair, and a few lines further Walsyngham. We constantly come across other places, which it would be uninteresting and unnecessary to enumerate.

Besides, the poem abounds with circumstances, both historical and political: thus he alludes to the deposition and murder of Edward II (B III, 126), Wyckliffe's translation of the Bible (B VIII, 90), and the great pestilences; also he particularly mentions the great storm of wind (B V, 14) "*þe south west wynde on saterday at evene*," on January 15. 1362. The last trace we have of Langland is in 1399, when he lived at Bristol and wrote his last poem "*Richard the Redeles*"; he probably died about 1400; where, is unknown.

As one generally learns to know the author through his works, we will contemplate our poet's character by giving a sketch of: "*Piers the Plowman*". The allegorical dress in which the poem is clad, is well adapted to disclose his principles and sentiments.

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## PIERS THE PLOWMAN.

The whole poem consists of a series of Visions. Langland has not followed out any marked plan, but gives a succession of pictures; he describes vices and virtues, passing before his slumbering eye, in the shape of allegorical figures. He sees the world full of people, from the mighty king down to the humblest beggar; all appear to him in their peculiar characters; good and bad are there; some toiling for their daily bread, others arrayed in gorgeous

attire; priests are there too, 'who have deserted their flocks, corrupted themselves, they go about as wolves in sheep's clothing. With bitter satire our poet inveighs against such an abuse of priesthood, and says that:

*drede is at þe laste — Lest crist in consistorie accorse  
ful manye.*

Throughout the whole poem, he rails at the luxuries and vices of Church, State, and social life; showing where the evil lay and how it might be amended. He himself a secular priest, and recognising priesthood as a divine institution, must have felt the more the miseries which weighed upon the people, owing on one side to the arrogance of Pope and Cardinals, on the other to the extreme corruption of the actual prelates, monks and mendicants. Holiness and Charity Langland considers as being of more true worth than pilgrimages and penances. Reason and Conscience, he says, are the proper guides for the soul. — Loyal to the king in person, who in his idea represents the executive power of God on earth, he makes a firm stand against a constitution, in which "Mede" (bibery), and not "Resoun" and "Conscience", are the king's advisers. The author's intimate knowledge of life in all its phases, joined to a sound common sense, are conspicuous in every line he writes. Langland's satirical talent reaches its climax in the personification of the seven deadly sins. "Resoun" preaches a sermon to the assembled people, which seizes upon them, rousing their sleeping consciences. "Repentance" leads them to confess their wickedness. — "Wratthe" and "Sleuthe", personifications of priests, are especially well drawn. We will give some parts of each:

Passus V, 134 (Text B) etc.

*Now awaketh wratthe with two whyte eyen  
And nyvelyng with þe nose and his nekke hangyng,  
'I am wrath', quod he 'I was sum-tyme a frere,*

And þe coventes Gardyner for to graffe ympes <sup>1)</sup>;  
 On limitoures <sup>2)</sup> and listres <sup>3)</sup> lesynges <sup>4)</sup> I ymped <sup>5)</sup>,  
 Tyl þei bere leves of low speche lordes to plese,  
 And sithen þei blosmed obrode in boure to here shriftes.  
 And now is fallen þer-of a frute þat folke han wel levere  
 Schewen her schriftes to hem þan shryve hem to her per-  
 sones.

And now persones han parceyved, þat Freres parte with  
 hem,

þise possessioneres preche and deprave freres,  
 And freres fyndeth hem in defaute as folke bereth witnes,  
 That whan þei preche þe þoeple in many place aboute,  
 I, wrath, walke with hem and wisse <sup>6)</sup> hem of my bokes.  
 þus þei speken of spirituale þat eyther despiseth other,  
 Til þei be bothe beggers and by my spirituale libben,  
 Or elles alle riche and riden aboute.  
 I, wrath, rest nevere þat I ne moste folwe  
 This wykked folke for suche is my grace.

— — — — —  
 Of wykked wordes I, wrath here wortes I-made,  
 Til "þow lixe" <sup>7)</sup> and "þow lixe" lopen oute at ones,  
 And eyther hitte other under þe cheke  
 Hadde þei had knyves, bi cryst her eyther had killed other.

— — — — —  
 Al þe wikkednesse þat I wote bi any of owre bretheren,  
 I couth <sup>8)</sup> it in owre cloistre þat al owre covent wote it'.

Passus V, 395 etc. (Text B).

þanne come sleuthe al bislabered with two slymy eizen,  
 'I most sitte', seyde þe segge, 'or elles shulde I nappe;  
 I may nouzte stonde ne stoupe ne withoute a stole knele.

1) shoots grafted in. 2) friars licensed to ask alms within  
 a limited district. 3) lectors. 4) lives. 5) to engraft.  
 6) to teach (comp. the Germ. weisen, unterweisen). 7) liest. 8) knew.

'What! awake, renke' <sup>1)</sup>. quod repentance 'and rape' <sup>2)</sup> þe  
to shrifte'.

'If I shulde deye bi þis day me liste' <sup>3)</sup> nouzte to loke,  
I can nouzte perfittly my pater-noster as þe prest it syngeth,  
But I can rymes of Robyn hood and Randolf erle of  
Chestre,

Ac neither of owre lorde ne of owre lady þe leste þat  
euer was made.

I have made vowes fourty and forzete hem on þe morne,  
I parfourned nevre penaunce as þe prest me hizte <sup>4)</sup>,  
Ne ryzte sori for my synnes zet was I nevere.

And 3if I bidde any bedes but if it be in wrath,  
þat I telle with my tonge is two myle fro myne herte.

I am occupied eche day haliday and other,  
With ydel tales atte ale and otherwhile in cherches;  
Goddess peyne and his passioun ful selde þynke I þere-on.  
I visited nevere fieble men ne fettered folke in puttes <sup>5)</sup>,  
I have levere <sup>6)</sup> here an harlotrie <sup>7)</sup> or a somer-game of  
souteres <sup>8)</sup>,

Or lesynges to laughe at and belye my neighbore,  
þan al þat euer Marke made Mathew, Iohn, & lucas.  
And vigilies and fastyng dayes alle þise late I passe,

— — — — —  
I have be prest and persoun passyng thretti wynter,  
zete can I neither solfe <sup>9)</sup> ne synge ne seyntes lyves rede;  
But I can fynde in a felde or in a fourlonge an hare,  
Better þan in 'beatus vir' or in 'beati omnes'  
Construe oon clause wel and kenne <sup>10)</sup> it to my parochienes.  
I can holde lovedayes and here a Reves <sup>11)</sup> rekenyng,  
Ac in canoun ne in þe decretales I can nouzte rede a lyne.

---

1) man.      2) haste.      3) please.      4) commanded.  
5) dungeons.    6) rather.    7) idle-tale.    8) a summer-game played  
by shoemakers.    9) sing by notes.    10) explain.    11) steward.

3if I bigge <sup>1)</sup> and borwe it but 3if it be ytailled <sup>2)</sup>,  
 I forzete it as 3erne and 3if men me axe  
 Six sithes <sup>3)</sup> or sevene I forsake it with othes,  
 And þus tene <sup>4)</sup> I trewe men ten hundreth tymes.

— — — — —  
 I ran aboute in 3outhē and 3af me nou3te to lerne  
 And evere sith <sup>5)</sup> have I be beggere for my foule sleuthe;  
 'Heu michi, quod sterilem vitam duxi Iuvenilem'!  
 Still more vivid is the picture of "Glotoun going to  
 schrifte".

Passus V, 304 etc. (Text B.)

Now bigynneth glotoun for to go to schrifte,  
 And kaires <sup>6)</sup> hym to-kirke-ward his coupe <sup>7)</sup> to schewe.  
 Ac Beton þe brewestere bad hym good morwe,  
 And axed of hym with þat whiderward he wolde.  
 'To holi cherche', quod he 'for to here masse,  
 And sithen I wil be shryven and synne namore'.  
 'I have gode ale, gossib' quod she 'glotoun, wiltow assaye'?  
 'Hastow auzte in þi purs any hote spices'?  
 'I have peper and piones' quod she 'and a pounde of  
 garlike,  
 A ferthyngworth of fenel-seed for fastyng dayes'.  
 þanne goth glotoun in and grete othes after;

— — — — —  
 And upholderes <sup>8)</sup> an hepe erly bi þe morwe  
 Gewen glotoun with glad chere good ale to hansel <sup>9)</sup>.

— — — — —  
 þere was laughyng and louryng <sup>10)</sup> and 'let go þe cuppe',  
 And seten so til evensonge and songen umwhile,  
 Tyl glotoun had y-globbed a galoun an a lille <sup>11)</sup>

1) buy. 2) scored on a tally (a stick on which the amount of money is scored). 3) times. 4) injure. 5) since.  
 6) betakes. 7) sin. 8) old-clothes-men. 9) bribe. 10) scowling.  
 11) gill, a quarter of a pint.

*He myzte neither steppe ne stonde er he his staffe hadde;  
 And þanne gan he go liche a gleomannes <sup>1)</sup> bicche,  
 Somme tyme aside and somme tyme arrere,  
 As who-so leyth lynes forto lacche foules.  
 And whan he drough to þe dore þanne dymmed his eighen,  
 He stumbled on þe thresshewolde an threwe to þe erthe.  
 Clement þe cobelere cauhte hym bi þe myddel,  
 For to lifte hym alofte and leyde him on his knowes <sup>2)</sup>;*

— — — — —  
*With al þe wo of þis worlde his wyf and his wenche  
 Baren hym home to his bedde and brouhte hym þerinne.  
 And after al þis excesse he had an accidie <sup>3)</sup>,  
 þat he slepe saterday and sonday til sonne zede <sup>4)</sup> to reste.  
 þanne waked he of his wynkyng <sup>5)</sup> and wiped his eyghen;  
 þe fyrste worde þat he warpe <sup>6)</sup> was 'where is þe bolle'?  
 His wif gan edwite hym þo how wikkedlich he lyved,  
 And repentance rizte so rebuked hym þat tyme:  
 'As þow with wordes and werkes hast wrouhte yvel in  
 þi lyve*

*Shryve þe and be shamed þer-of and shewe it with þi mouth'.  
 'I, glotoun' quod þe gome <sup>7)</sup> 'gylti me zelde <sup>8)</sup>,  
 þat I have trespassed with my tonge I can nouhte telle  
 how ofte,*

*Sworen 'goddess soule' and 'so god me help and halidom',  
 þere no nede ne was nyne hundreth tymes;  
 And over-seye me at my sopere and some tyme at nones*

— — — — —  
*Overdelicately on fastyng dayes drunken and eten bothe,  
 And sat some tyme so longe þere þat I slepe and ate  
 at ones.*

*For love of tales in tavernes to drynke þe more, I dyned,  
 And hyed to þe mete er none whan fastyny dayes were'.*

---

1) gleeman's.    2) knees.    3) fit of slothfulness.    4) went.  
 5) slumber.    6) uttered.    7) man.    8) yield.

*'This shewing shrifte' quod repentance 'shal be meryte to þe'.  
 And þanne gan glotoun grete and gret doel <sup>1)</sup> to make  
 For his lither <sup>2)</sup> lyf þat he lyved hadde,  
 And avowed to fast — 'for hunger or for thurst  
 Shal nevere fische on þe fryday defen <sup>3)</sup> in my wombe,  
 Tyl abstinence myn aunte have zive me leve;  
 And 3it have I hated hir al my lyf tyme'.*

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The prayers of "Repentance" obtain pardon for all these penitent sinners, who after their deliverance go to seek "Treuthe". Now appears Piers the Plowman, in the personification of a Mediator, to lead the erring souls to "Treuthe"; after having given proper advice to some nobles, he provides the people with hard labour. Then "Treuthe" sends a bull of pardon, which causes a dispute between Piers and a priest, who refuses to acknowledge the message as a true one. The tumult of this quarrel awakens the Dreamer, who concludes with an earnest exhortation to all christendom.

Passus VII, 195 (Text B.).

*For-þi I conseilte alle cristene to crye god mercy,  
 And Marie his moder be owre mene <sup>4)</sup> bitwene,  
 þat god gyve us grace here ar we gone hennes,  
 Suche werkes to werke while we ben here,  
 þat after owre deth-day dowel reherce,  
 At þe day of dome we dede as he hi3te.*

With this ends the Vision of Piers the Plowman,\* properly so called.

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1) lamentation.    2) vicious.    3) be digested.    4) mediator.

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## DOWEL, DOBET AND DOBEST.

We will touch but slightly upon the Visions of Dowel, Dobet and Dobest.

The Dreamer searches for the home of Dowel and is especially assisted by "Thought", "Witte", "Study", "Clergy" and "Scripture". The last two disagree with William on the subject of Predestination, when he maintains that poor and honest people have more chance than the luxurious of attaining salvation and eternal happiness.

In Dobet "Soul" and "Resoun" are the principal apparitions. They teach him how there is but one Saviour, Christ the Lord. In it we meet with many beautiful passages, — above all the eighteenth Passus. It details the history of Christ, his crucifixion, his triumphant descent into hell, and his victory over "Death" and "Satan".

In the Vision of Dobest the Dreamer beholds Antichrist, reigning upon earth; "Disease" and "Death" lay their hands upon high and low; "Church" is in great danger; "Sleuthe" and "Pryde" assail "Conscience", who with a final struggle grasps his staff, and wanders far and wide to seek "Piers the Plowman".

Here the Dreamer awakes.



## LANGUAGE.

The sensation which Langland's poem raised was greatly due to his language. The style and form in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, somewhat adopted from the Anglo-Saxon, and more antiquated than that which we meet with in Chaucer and others of his contemporaries, are doubtless a reason for the greater popularity which our poet enjoyed at his time. Langland, the poet of the people, whose voice was heard from the Malvern hills, expressed the feelings of thousands, who suffered like him under the overwhelming oppressions, in his plain provincial idiom, and in a rhythm of the good old times, still popular and familiar. Antiquated as the language is, it possesses many beauties, and surely does not deserve the severe criticism which Warton (comp. II. pag. 101. London 1824) bestows upon it, when he says: "This imposed constraint of seeking identical initials, and the affectation of obsolete English by demanding a constant and necessary departure from the natural and obvious forms of expression, while it circumscribed the powers of the author's genius, contributed also to render his manner extremely perplexed, and to disgust the reader with obscurities".

Langland's poem gains power, in our opinion, by its peculiar quaintness of style and form. Whilst Chaucer describes life for refined ears in a more polished language, Langland clothes his words in a language fit for the comprehension of all; he wants to improve the morals of the whole nation; high and low, rich and poor, shall see their faults, repent and search for "Resoun" and "Treuthe". For the most part his language is pure and simple, and void of coarse expressions which might offend; but when he wishes to warn people earnestly against their sins, he paints life with its vices as they are. He does not write to please, but to do good.

## METRE.

As above mentioned, Langland adopted the form as well as the style from the Anglo-Saxon, — the “alliterative metre”, consisting of a certain number of accented syllables, in a line or couplet, all beginning with the same sound. Each line, falling into two half lines, must contain at least three accented syllables; viz., the first half, two such, and the second, one or two.

Although, upon the whole, Langland preserves these rules, he sometimes allows himself licences. The Passages, which we have already cited, will suffice to give an idea of the rhythm of the poem.

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## TEXTS.

The poem *Piers the Plowman*, containing besides the *Visions of Dowel, Dobet and Dobest*, exists in not less than forty-four MSS. <sup>1)</sup>, exhibiting five different shapes of the poem, three of which are ascribed to Langland himself, whilst the other two are merely medleys of various parts of the Texts, due to the scribes.

— The three real Texts, denoted as Text A or Vernon MS, Text B or Crowley MS, and Text C or Whitacker MS, have been separately edited by the Rev. W.W. Skeat M.A. London 1867, 1869, 1873. —

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1) A full explanatory description of these different MSS. will be found in the Prefaces to the three Texts, ed. by Mr. Skeat.

We easily understand that the effect of the poem, which Langland at first wrote only in a rough sketch in 1362 (Text A), received, as it was, so warmly, and entirely adapted, as it was, to the times, encouraged him to reproduce it with numerous alterations and additions. Thus he delivered it to the public in the second shape in 1377 (B Text), and in the last and most extended form in 1393 (C Text).

Regarding the A Text in the shape in which we now possess it, it does not represent the author's dialect, but a language, Southernized by the scribe, and exhibiting a great many gratuitous deviations. The B Text, based upon the beautiful MS. Laud 581, is by far the best of the three; it excels in compactness and vigour, when we compare it with the C Text, in which the author rather loses himself in theological subtleties. The difference of the language in these two Texts is but a very slight one, caused by the author's having somewhat adopted the Western dialect, as he spent his last years (when he rewrote his poem for the second time) in the Western districts of England.

From a close examination and comparison of the Texts, we must pronounce the B Text to be the best suited for giving us a correct idea of the author's real language and peculiarities, provided that the C Text be used throughout as a commentary to it. With this view, then, we have chosen the "Vision of Piers the Plowman" from Text B, as the foundation for our grammatical Treatise.

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1) The Vision of Piers the Plowman from Text B has been separately published in the Clarendon Press Series.

## VOWELS.

### A. THE ANGLO-SAXON VOWELS.

#### The A.-S. short a (Gothic a).

ā

I. preceding m and n remains a or changes into o, as in Anglo-Saxon:

##### 1) in *Monosyllables*:

A.-S. *banc* (scamnum) — *banke* pr. 8; *gann*, pret. of *ginnan* (incipere) — *gan* pr. 11, pr. 143; *svanc*<sup>1)</sup>, pret. of *svincan* (laborare) — *swonken* 3. pl. pr. 21; *vann*, pret. of *vinan* (obtinere) — *wonnen* 3. pl. pr. 22; *fand*, pret. of *findan* (invenire) — *sonde* pr. 58<sup>2)</sup>; *han*, pres. of *habban* (habere) — *han* pr. 35; *vamb*, *vomb* (venter) — *wombe* III, 84; *lamb* (agnus) — *lombe* V, 560; *lang* — *longe* pr. 195; *land* (terra) — *londe* III, 135; *hand* (manus) — *hondes* pl. V, 294; C *hand* VII, 109.

##### 2) in *Polysyllables*:

A.-S. *vandrian* (vagari) — *wandryng* pr. 19; *manig*, *monig* — *manye* pr. 25, pr. 99; *viþstandan* (obsistere) — *withstonde* pr. 156; *standan* (stare) — *stondeth* I, 50; *banan*, *bonnan* (to ban) — *banne* I, 61; *hangian*, *hongian*

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1) For the A.-S. *þ* we have always written *v* in Anglo-Saxon, *w* in English words.

2) For further examples of this class of Verbs see under: Verbs, Change of Vowel I.

(pendere) — *hange* VI, 63; *hongen* I, 172; *honged* I, 68; *þankjan* (to thank) — *þonkynye* II, 148; *gangan* (ire) — *gange* II, 167; *panne* (brain-pan) — *panne* IV, 78.

II. The A.-S. short *a*, before other consonants:

1) *appears as short a* before double consonants.

*catt* (cat) — *cattis* gen. pr. 178; *cattes* pr. 179; *lappa* (lap) — *lappe* II, 35; *gabbian* (mentiri) — *gabbe* III, 179.

2) *changes into long a* before simple consonants.

It must be observed that this lengthening of *ǣ* into *â* especially takes place in the radical vowels of Verbs. The termination *en*, *e* [arisen from the A.-S. *jan* (*an*)] requires a lengthening in the stem.

*faran* (ire) — *fare* VI, 107; *fareth* II, 183; *macian* (facere) — *maken* VI, 287; *crāfian* (poscere) — *craved* VI, 94; *grafan* (sculperere) — *grave*, *ungrave* IV, 130; *gladian* (laetificare) — *glade* VI, 121; *vadan* (vadere) — *wadeth* V, 577 (Germ. *waten*); *maga* (stomachus) — *mawe* V, 123; *hara* (lepus) — *hare* V, 424, VI, 30; *lagu* (lex) — *lawe* pr. 212; *lawes* pl. II, 22.

*It is occasionally weakened to o*, as for instance:

*vag* (paries) — *woves* pl. III, 61; *clavian* (scalpere) *clowe* pr. 154.

ä The A.-S. short *ä* (Gothic *a*) wavers a great deal in its transition.

I. *it answers to a*, before consonants which are retained from the Anglo-Saxon.

*þät* (ut) — *that* pr. 12; *väs* (fuit) — *was* pr. 1; *bär* (tulit) — *bar* II, 3; *bär* (nudus) — *in thredebare* V, 198; *fäst* (firmus) — *faste* I, 96; *cräft* (artificium) — *craft* I, 137; *craftes* pl. pr. 118; *crafty* pr. 162; *säcc* (saccus) — *sakke* VI, 9; *äfter* (post) — *after* II, 184; *äftre* III, 260; *fäder* (pater) — *fader* I, 14.

II. as in Anglo-Saxon, it is sometimes replaced by *e*.

*älde*, *eldo* (senectus) — *elde* V, 193; *härfest*, *herfest* (auctumnus) — *hervest* VI, 68; *fästan*, *festan* (firmare) — *fest* II, 123.

III. it forms the diphthongs *ai*, *ay*, *ei*, with a following *i*, arisen from an original *g* which has been vocalised, and appears thus in the middle as well as at the end of words (what the German Grammarians call *in- und auslautend*).

*fäger* (pulcher) — *faire* I, 4; *feire* V, 59; *fägen* (laetus) — *faine* II, 77; *fayne* II, 157; *frägn* from *frignan* (interrogare) — *frained*, pret. I, 58; *frayned* V, 532; *mägen* (puella) — *mayden* II, 131; *maydenes* pl. II, 43; *läg* from *licgan* (jacere) — *lay* pret. pr. 9.

The following *l* is doubled in: *tägel* (cauda) — *taille* II, 185; *nägel*, *nägl* (clavus) — *nailles* pl. III, 190. — The Preterite *cväð* (dixit), though occasionally occurring as *quath* C. I, 138; *quatz* VI, 3; — has usually the form *quod*, *quoth*.

The A.-S. *e* (Gothic *a* generally if followed by *i*). *e*

I. remains *e*.

*hel* (Gothic *hali*) (tartarus) — *helle* I, 123; *bet* (Gothic *batis*) (melius) — *better* I, 8; *men* (Gothic *manni*) (homines) — *men* pl. pr. 18; *seeg* (vir) — *segge* III, 63; *segges* pl. II, 158; *hefig* (gravis) — *heavy* I, 151; *belg* (venter) — *belies* pl. pr. 41; *stede* (locus) — *stede* pr. 96; *settan* (ponere) — *settyng*, pres. part. pr. 21; *cennan* (docere) — *kenne* I, 136; *hentan* (capere) — *hente* V, 5; *tellan* (narrare) — *tellen* pr. 92, pr. 101; *veddian* (spondere) — *wedde* IV, 146.

II. the Gothic *a* reappears, forming, in connexion with the following *i*, the diphthong *ai* (*ay*) in:

*plegian* (ludere) — *playe* pr. 171 (to play); though the verbal formes *pleyde* pr. 151 (played); *seyde* pr. 131 (said); *leyde* V, 359; VI, 124 (*laid*); prove that this principle only

began to be carried out in Langland's time. With regard to Text C, we find that Langland frequently substitutes *u* for *e*, a sign of the Western dialect. This is a peculiarity which we do not observe in the B Text. A few examples will suffice herep.

*sulle* for *sellē* X, 55 (to sell); *hure* for *here* I, 30 (their); *3ut* for *3et* VII, 318, 328 (yet); *shutten* for *shetten* III, 223 (to shut); *he ful* for *fel* I, 113. II, 120 (he fell); *þei fullen* for *fellen* II, 126 (they fell)-etc.

**ea** The A.-S. *ea* (Gothic *a* before *l*, *r*, *h*) <sup>1)</sup>.

I. *becomes a*.

1) before *l*.

*eal* (omnis) — *alle* pl. pr. 18; *ealu* (cerevisia) — *ale* VI, 117; *bealu* (malum) — *bale* V, 89; *heals* (collum) — *hals* pr. 170. pr. 179.

2) before *ll*.

*feallan* (cadere) — *fallen* pr. 65; *falle* IV, 156; *bifal-leth* I, 52; *gealla* (bilis) — *galle* V, 119.

3) before *r*.

*bearn* (filius) — *barne* II, 3; *barnes* III, 151; *cearu* (cura) — *care* I, 61; *hearm* (damnum) — *harmes* pl. IV, 30; *hearde* (dure) — *harde* pr. 21; *veard* (custos) — *wardes* pl. pr. 94; *vearnian* (cavere) — *I warne* pr. 207; *gearcian* (parare) — *3arketh* VII. 80; *dear* (audeo) — *dar* IV, 52.

4) now and then, also before other consonants.

*sceamu* (ignominia) — *shame* IV, 30; *sceap* (forma) — *skape* IV, 79; *geat* (porta) — *gatis* pl. pr. 104; *veaxan* (crescere) — *waxen* III, 300.

II. *changes into e*, caused by the uncertainty of pronunciation. In this case the sound of the *e* prevailed, while in the above examples the *a* must have been more accentuated.

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1) Koch, hist. Gr. I. pag. 49.

*eard* (terra) — *erthe* I, 7; *beard* (barba) — *berde* V, 194; *sceavian* (monstrare) — *shewe* pr. 106.

III. *appears as o*, before *ld*.

*bealdian* (animare) — *bolded* III, 198; *ceald* (frigidus) — *colde* adj. III, 190 subst. VI, 62; *healdian* (tenere) — *holde* V, 588.

but:

*beald* (audax) — *balder* compar. VII, 183.

The A.-S. short *i* (Gothic *i*, *a* or *u*), used indiscriminately with *y*, is found:

I. *as i* (*y*) before consonants, except *r*.

*bindan* (ligare) — *bynde* pr. 101; *stintan* (cessare) — *stynte* I, 120; *gif* (si) — *3if* pr. 37; *mid* (cum) — *myd* pr. 147; *lippe* (labrum) — *lippes* pl. pr. 213; *bliss* — *blisse* pr. 27; *missan* (carere) — *mysse* pr. 196; *plihtan* (obligare) — *plizted* pr. 46.

II. *as e* before *r* and other consonants, when it already admitted of a vacillation in A.-S.

*mirce* (obscurus) — *merke* I, 1; *hirne* (a corner) — *hernes* II, 233; *gifan*, *gefan*, *geofan* (dare) — *geven* pr. 74; (but *gyf* II, 119); *gitan* *getan* (gignere) — *gete* pr. 215; *begitan* (acquirere) — *begete* II, 40.

III. *strengthened to u* in:

*tilian* (laborare) — *tulyen* VII, 2 (but *tilie* pr. 120). Besides, the C Text offers a number of examples, owing to the tendency of the Western dialect to substitute *u* for other vowels (comp. *e*), such as: *dide* (did) — *dude* X, 112; *sið* (since) — *sutth* I, 62; *girles* (girls) — *gurles* X, 76; *micel*, *mucel* (much) — *muche* X, 84; the B Text has *moche* pr. 182.

The A.-S. *ë*, (arisen from the Gothic *i*).

ë

I. *remains e*

1) at the end of words and before the liquids: *l* and *r*.

*he* (ille) — *he*; *me* (mihi) — *me*; *ge* (vos) — *3e*; *vel* (bene) — *wel*; *help* (auxilium) — *help*; *fell* (pellis) — *fel*



(Germ. *Fell*) I, 15; *feld* (campus) — *felde* pr. 17; *delfan* (fodere) — *delve* V, 552; *beran* (ferre) — *beren* pr. 161; *bere* III, 195; *bereth* II, 38; IV, 57; *sverian* (jurare) — *swere* I, 103; *seldan* (raro) — *selde* pr. 20; C — *seylde* I, 22.

2) before mutes.

*frec* (audax) — *freke* IV, 12; *frekes* pl. V, 170; *bre-can* (frangere) — *brekeþ* IV, 57; *svefen* (somnus) — *swevene* pr. 11; *sprecan*, *specan* (loqui) — *speke* pr. 129; *fre-tan* (vorare) — *frete* II, 95; *veder* (tempestas) — *wederes* pl. VI, 326.

II. *it changes into the diphthong ei (ey) by means of the vocalisation of the following g.*

*veg* (via) — *wey* pr. 48; *weye* pr. 174; *vegan* (librare) — *weye* V, 204; *tvegen* (duo) — *tweyne* V, 31.

ëo The A.-S. *ëo* (*io*) (Gothic *i*, *ai*) must have been accented on the *e*; this appears to be proved by the alterations which it underwent, usually preserving the *e* as the principal sound.

I. *ëo becomes e.*

1) before *l*.

*seolf* (ipse) — *hem selven* pr. 59; *seoloc* (sericum) — *selke* pr. 210; *feola* (multum) — *fele* III, 338.

2) before *r*.

*ceorfan* (secare) — *herve* VI, 106; *ceorl* (vir) — *cherles* VI, 50 (in the C Text we read: *churles*); *veorold* (mundus) — *world* I, 8; *eorldom* — *erldome* II, 83; *heorte* (cor) — *herte* I, 4. I, 140; *deorc* (tenebrosus) — *derke* pr. 16; *veorc*, *verc* (opus) — *werk* pr. 162; *werkis* pl. I, 89; yet we find: *workes* pr. 3.

3) before mutes.

*eode* (ivit) — *zede* pr. 40; *feoh* (pecus) — *fes* V, 590; *heofonrice* (coelorum regnum) — *heveneriche* pr. 27.

II. *ëo changes into i (y) ie in:*

*seolfor* (argentum) — *silver* I, 101; C — *selver* II, 101;

*feohtan* (certare) — *fy3te* IV, 52; *beorn* (vir) — *biernes* pl. III, 265; *feorða* (quartus) — *fierthe* VII, 52.

Anomalous form: *eom* (sum) — *am*.

The A.-S. *u* (derived from the Gothic *u* or *i*). *u*

I. *remained u or changed into o*; both vowels are often used in the same word; — a sign that their pronunciation was very much the same.

*ful* (plenus) — *ful* pr. 17; *dredful* pr. 16; *sum* (aliquis) — *some* pr. 20; *summe* V, 636; C has *somme*; *sumor* (aestas) — *somer* pr. 1; *sunne* (sol) — *sonne* pr. 1; *vundor* (miraculum) — *wondres* pl. pr. 4; *guma* (homo) — *gome* V, 541; *lufu* (amor) — *love* pr. 26; *tunge* (lingua) — *tonge* pr. 51. I, 88; *cursian* (maledicere) — *cursien*, *corsien*, *acorse* pres. sg. subj. pr. 99.

II. *was intensified to ou in*:

*grund* (fundus) — *ground* II, 29; *agrounde* I, 90; *pund* (libra) — *pounde* V, 312; *poundes* pl. pr. 212; *fuhton* pret. of *feohtan* (pugnare) — *fou3ten* 3. pl. pr. 42.

The A.-S. *o* (arisen from the Gothic *u*) *remained o the same* in *Piers the Plowman*.

*bonda* (servus) — *bonde* pr. 216; *croft* (agellus) — *crofte* V, 581; *hoppan* (salire) — *hoppe* III, 199; *loca* (clausura) — *lokke* I, 200; *vord* (verbum) — *worde* I, 145; *wordes* pl. I, 72.

In some instances the A.-S. *o* *passes into ou*; this transition is the result of the Vocalisation of consonants (*g* and *h* more especially tend to this). Examples will be found under: *g* and *h*.

The A.-S. *y* shows several alterations, owing to the *y* vacillation which it already underwent in Anglo-Saxon, where we sometimes find it substituted for *i*, *e* and *u*. The original *y*, arising from a modification (Umlaut) of the Gothic *u*, occasionally reappears as such or broadens still further to *o*.

I. its *interchange with i* has already been mentioned under *i*; so a few examples will suffice here.

*bysig* (industrius) — *bisi* I, 6; *cnyttan* (nodare) — *knitten* pr. 169; *pyncan* (videri) — *thynketh* pr. 165; *cynd* (natura) — *kynde* II, 27.

II. *as i it changes into e in*:

*bydel* (praeco) — *bedel* II, 109; *cyrice* (ecclesia) — *cherche* I, 75; *holicherche* I, 178; *gyrd* (virga) — *zerdes* pl. V, 214 (yards); *vyrs* (peius) — *werse* I, 26; *myrge*, *merge* (jucundus) — *merye* pr. 10; but: *muryer* comparative I, 107; *gyrne*, *georne* (libenter) — *zerne* I, 35 (Germ. gern).

III. *the Gothic u reappears in*:

*brycg* (pons) — *brugge* V, 601; *brugges* pl. VII, 28; *gylt* (delictum) — *gult* V, 455; *lyðer* (malus) — *luther* V, 118; *myrhð*, *murhð* (laetitia) — *murthes* pl. pr. 33; *hyll* (collis) — *hulles* pl. pr. 5.

*it appears as o in*:

*fylgen*, *folgian* (sequi) — *folweth* I, 40; *lyft* (aër) — *alof* I, 90 (Germ. Luft).

**a** The A.-S. long *a* (derived from the Gothic *ai*)

I. *remains a*, though but in few instances, comparatively speaking.

*amânsed*, pret. of *amânsumian* (excommunicare) — *mansed* II, 39; *âscian* (rogare) — *axeth* I, 36; *gârleac* (allium victorale comp. Ettmüller, Lexicon Anglo-Saxonicum, Quedlb. und Leipzig pag. 434) — *garlike* (garlic) V, 312.

Besides, the Verbs of the II. Class. (see under Inflection, Change of Vowel) mostly preserve the long *a* in the Preterite, as:

*gâf* pret. of *gifan* (dare) — *3af* I, 15; I, 107; II, 69.

For further examples comp. Verbs.

II. *generally changes into long o*, written as *o* or *oo*. Concerning the lengthening of vowels, we must observe that Langland only adds an *e*, unless he doubles

the vowel, or gives no sign whatever. An addition of other vowels for this purpose, — as for instance *a*, which we now so frequently employ as an orthographic expedient (*broad, oak, oats, groan, hoar*), — was totally unknown to our Poet. (comp. Strong Conj. Pret.)

*brâd* (latus) — *brode* pr. 8; III, 303; *âc* (quercu) — *okes* pl. V, 18; *âte* (avena) — *otes* IV, 38; *fâh* sg. (inimicus) *fâ* pl. — *foon* V, 96; *grânian* (gemere) — *grone* VI, 260; *hâr* (canus) — *hore* VI, 85; *lâr* (doctrina) — *lor* V, 38; *hâm* (domus) — *home* IV, 53; *homes* pl. III, 98; *becnâvan* (agnoscere) — *biknowen* pr. 204.

III. *sometimes appears as ai.*

*lâcan* (ludere) — *laike* pr. 172; *hâlsian* (salutare) — *hailsed* VII, 160.

Anomalous formation:

*hâd* — *hed* in *falshed* (falsehood) I, 64; but: *knizthod* pr. 112, pr. 116.

The A.-S. long æ (answering to the Gothic *ái* or *ê*, *â* Old-High-German *â*) is found:

I. *as e*, which transition mostly takes place; through consonantal influence the vowel occasionally loses the length of its sound.

*þâr* (ibi) — *there* pr. 17; *fâr* (timor) — *fere*; *spâc* (loquela) — *speche* pr. 52; *mânan* (significare) — *mene* I, 11; *râdan* (suadere) — *rede* pr. 191; *lâdan* (ducere) — *lede* pr. 126; *drâd* (timor) — *drede* pr. 98; *dredes* pl. pr. 152; *dredful* pr. 16; *lâce* (medicus) — *leche* I, 202; *brâde* (latitudo) — *brede* III, 202; *flâsc* (caro) — *flesch* I, 40; *dêlan* (distribuere) — *dele* I, 197.

II. *as a*, *sometimes e*.

*âr* (prius) — *ar* I, 73, but *er* III, 323; *ârest* (primum) — *arst* IV, 105. V, 468; *stâf* (baculus) — *staves* pl. pr. 53; *dâel* (vallis) — *dale* pr. 15; *vâter* (aqua) — *wateres* pl. pr. 9; *gevâer* (cautus) — *gywar* pr. 174; *war* II, 8;

*lêtan* (permittere) — *lateth* I, 200, *to lat þe catte worthe* (let the cat alone) pr. 187; but: *leten* II, 158; *lete* IV, 20.

III. *as o in*:

*mêst* (maximus) — *moste* I, 7; *nêiðer* (neque) — *noither* IV, 32. 130.

ê The A.-S. long *e* (Gothic *ê* or *ô*) nearly always remains *ê*.

*spêd* (festinatio) — *spede* III, 170; *grêne* (viridis) — *grene* VI, 283; (*ge*) *fêra* (socius) — *feres* pl. II, 6; *svête* (dulcis) — *swete* pr. 86; *cêpan* (tenere) — *kepe* pr. 100; *fêdan* (alere) — *fede* pr. 90; *fet* (fedeth) pr. 194; *dêman* (judicare) — *demen* pr. 96; *deme* I, 86; *sêcan* (quaerere) — *seke* pr. 47; *sêman* (apparere) — *semeth* pr. 32; *vênan* (putare) — *wene* III, 300.

It changes however into *o* (*ou*), if arisen from *eó* (Old-High-German *ia*, *iu*, *ie*). This particularly takes place in the Past Tenses of Reduplicate Verbs. For examples see under Inflection, Reduplication.

î The A.-S. long *i* (originating from the Gothic *ei* or *i*, before an *m* or *n*, which has fallen out) appears sometimes as *î*, sometimes as *ÿ*, without having been altered in its sound.

I. *î remains î in*:

*ric* (potens) — *riche* pr. 18; *cîld* (infans) — *childeren* pl. pr. 35; *lichama* (cadaver) — *likam* I, 37; but: *lykam* pr. 30; *ridan* (equitare) — *riden* I, 95; *grîpan* (rapere) — *gripeth* III, 181.

II. *î changes into ÿ in*:

*vîn* (vinum) — *wyn* pr. 228; *mîn* (meus) — *myne* II, 34; *pîn* (cruciatus) — *pyne* II, 103; *lîf* (vita) — *lyf* pr. 155; *lyflode* I, 18; but: *lîflode* I, 37; *brîdel* (frenum) — *brydel* IV, 21; *drîfan* (agere) — *dryven* pr. 224 (comp. Germ. treiben).

III. *î strengthens to o in*:

*vîfman* } (femina) — *womman* I, 71;  
*vimman* }

to *u* in: *stîvard* (steward) — *stewardcs* pl. pr. 96.

IV. *î is raised to ê in:*

*hiva, hivan* pl. (domesticus) — *hewe* V, 559; *hewen* pl. IV, 55.

The A.-S. long *o* (derived from Gothic *ô, é* or *â*, if *ô* followed by *nð, ns, nf*) (comp. Ettm. Lex. Anglo-Sax. pag. XVII, Praef.).

I. *generally remains o.*

*tô* (Prep.) — *to*; *rôd* (crux) — *rode* II, 3; *fôda* (alimentum) — *fode* pr. 42. VI, 21; *dôm* (judicium) — *dome* II, 205; *dôn* (facere) — *don* III, 292; *môt* in *wardemotes* pl. pr. 94 (conventus) (meetings of a ward); *moothalle* IV, 135; *môtian* (disputare) — *mote* I, 174.

Strong Verbs, having *a* in the Infinitive and Present Tenses, change this into *ô* in the Preterite. See under Inflection, Change of Vowel III.

We add a few examples, in which the *o* appears still to be long, whilst in Modern English it has become short.

*blôd* (sanguis) — *blode* III, 204; Text C: *blod* IV, 263; *flôd* (fluctus) — *flodes* pl. VI, 326; *brôc* (rivus) — *broke* VI, 137; *gôd* (bonus) — *gode* pr. 226; *C* has: *good* IV, 92; *goodliche* II, 179; *goudnesse* IV, 22; *bôc* (liber) — *boke* pr. 101; *lôcien* (videre) — *loke* pr. 172. I, 207; *môder* (mater) — *moder* II, 49; *genôh, genôg* (enough) (satis) — *ynowe* II, 143 (comp. Germ. genug).

The A.-S. long *u* (answering to the Gothic *iu* or *u*) *û* appears:

I. *as ou* (denoting a long sound).

*scrûd* (vestis) — *shroudes* pl. pr. 2; the C Text has: *shrobbis* I, 2; *clût* (panniculus) — *cloutes* pl. II, 220; *tûr* (turris) — *tour* pr. 14; *bûr* (bower, Lady's room) — *boure* II, 64; *prût* (superbus) — in *proudeherte* V, 63; *dûn* (down) — *adoun* IV, 92; *nûpa* (nunc) — *nouthe* adv. III, 288; *bûhsom* (flexibilis) from *bugan*, Gothic *biugan*, Germ. *beugen, biegen* — *buxome* I, 110; *boxome* III, 263; *unboxome* II, 82; (comp. the Germ. *biegsam, unbiegsam*).

In the following examples an original short *u* became long already in Anglo-Saxon, by the omission of the consonant *n*.

*us* (Gothic *uns*) (nobis) — *us*; *ure* (Gothic *unsar*) (noster) — *owre*; *cuðe* (Gothic *kunþa*) (novit) pret. from *cunnan* — *couthe* pr. 182.

II. *û* changes into a short *o* in:

*scûnian* (evitare) — *shonye* (to shun) pr. 174.

A contraction is found in:

*drûgað* (siccitas) — *drought* VI, 290.

ŷ The A.-S. long *y* [Gothic *û* (followed by *i*) or *iu*] appears:

I. *retained as y*.

*mÿs* pl. from *mus* (mures) — *mys* pr. 147; *drÿgan* (sicare) — *whan þow dryest* I, 25.

II. *it undergoes a transition into uy (ui)*, which leads us to conclude that a vacillation still existed in the pronunciation, perhaps a relic of the compound origin of the A.-S. *ŷ*; it was but gradually that a unity of sound settled a more decided orthography.

*hÿr* (merces) — *huire* V, 557; but: *hyre* V, 559. The C-Text gives: *hure*; *hÿrian* (conducere) — *huyred* VI, 116; *prÿta* (superbia) — *pruyde* pr. 22; *bryð* (sponsa) — *bruydale* II, 43; but: *bridale* II, 54 (bridal).

III. *it is replaced by e*, when it answers to the diphthongs *eó* and *eá* (Gothic *iu* and *au*). Thus we have:

*lÿsan*, *leósan* (solvere) — *lese* II, 35; *unlesen* pr. 213; *lÿfan*, *leófan* (concedere) — *leve* 3. sg. pr. subj. pr. 126; *tÿman*, *teónian* (irritare) — *tened* pret. II, 14. III, 320; *dÿre*, *deóre* (carum) — *dere* pr. 209. I, 87; *hÿran*, *hedran* (Gothic *hausjan*) (audire) — *heren* IV, 115; *drÿman* (jubilare) *dreám* — *dremes* pl. VII, 152 (comp. Germ. Traum).

In the C-Text the A.-S. *ŷ* is mostly represented by *u*, according to the tendency of the Western dialect.

An anomalous form is:

*clýsan* (claudere) — *close* pr. 105; *closyng* pr. 104.

The A.-S. diphthong *eá* [mostly arisen from *oá* (in-*eá* instead of *ao*) except some words, in which it stands for the Gothic *áu* (comp. Etm. Lexic. Anglo-Saxonic. Praef. pag. XVIII)] is represented:

I. *by e or ee*.

In Modern English the *ea* reappears in orthography, although it has merely the sound of a simple long *e*.

*eák* (etiam) — *eke* II, 92; *eáre* (Gothic *áuso*; auris) — *ere* IV, 13; *eres* pl. pr. 78; *eást* (oriens) — *est* pr. 13; *geár* (annus) — *zere* pl. pr. 189; *leáf* (folium) — *lef* III, 337; *heáp* (cumulus) — *hep* V, 233; *heep* pr. 53; *sleán* (contraction from *sleáhan*) (ferire) — *sleen* III, 285. Differently pronounced was the *e* in:

*dedáð* (mors) — *ded* III, 265; *deth* I, 127; *feáve* (pauci) — *fewe* pr. 65.

II. *by ei or i (y)* especially before *h*.

*beáh, béh* (armilla, annulus Etm. pag. 301) — *bei3* pr. 165; *bizes* pl. pr. 161; *heáh* (altus) — *hiegh* pr. 13. pr. 128; *hei3* pr. 140. The C-Text has: *hye* II, 64; *heie* II, 70; *neáh* (prope) — *nei3e* V, 94; *þeáh* (tamen) — *þei3* I, 40; but: *thou3* pr. 185; C shows *þauh* II, 125; *fleáh* (pret. of *fleóhan*, fugere) — *flei3* II, 210; C has: *fleggh* II, 119.

III. *eá replaced by ý*, see under: *ý*.

Anomalous formations are:

*ceápmón* (mercator) — *chapman* pr. 64; though we find *e* in: *ceápung* (mercatus) — *chepynge* IV, 56; *creáp* (pret. of *creópan*, repere) — *crope* pr. 186.

The A.-S. diphthong *eó* (*ió*) (arisen from the *eó* Gothic *iu*) underwent a transition, analogous to that of *eá*. It appears:

I. *as e or ee*.

*gleó* (gaudium) — *glee* pr. 34; *leód* (populus) — *ledē*



I, 139; *ledes* III, 96; but still we read: *leode* III, 32; *cneóvan* (flectere) — *knelyng* pr. 73; *bitveón* (prep. inter) — *bytweene* pr. 17; *deóp* (profundus) — *depe* pr. 15; *C deep* I, 17; *teóna* (damnum) — *teneful* III, 345 (harmful); *bi-neóðan* (adv. deorsum) — *binethe* pr. 15; *preóst* (sacerdos) — *prest* pr. 68; C has: *prest* VIII, 10; *preest* VIII, 14; *feónd* (hostis) — *fende* 40; *fendes* pl. I, 113.

## II. *as o in:*

*ceósan* (eligere) — *chosen* pr. 31; *treóvian* (fidere) — *troue* III, 19.

III. For examples, *where the A.-S. eó changes into ê (sometimes ô) in the Preterite of Reduplicate Verbs, see under Inflection.*

IV. *eó replaced by ŷ, see under ŷ III.*

The interchange of *eó* and *eá* which sometimes took place in Anglo-Saxon, will easily explain the similar development which those two diphthongs underwent afterwards.

## B. THE FRENCH VOWELS.

In our Poem we find the English already abounding with words originally French. After the Norman Conquest, they were gradually assumed, and inoculated into the language, the Semi-Saxon being unable to resist much longer the power of the new influence; they soon became understood and used by the people, as is proved by their use by Langland, who doubtless represents a poet of the people. He must have preached his Morality in a language, suitable to the comprehension of the laity. Although we find the words sometimes adopted in their French form, yet we discover a great inclination to anglicise them in spelling as well as Inflection. The French element was introduced in the form of the Norman dialect, which differs

from that of Picardy and Burgundy by the use of *u* instead of *o*, *ou* and *eu*; *ei* instead of *ai* and *oi*, and *e* instead of *ie*; and in the tendency which it shows to change *a* into *au* before the nasal *m* or *n* (comp. Diez, Grammatik der rom. Sprachen I, 128 etc.).

**The Old-French *a*** (answering to the Latin *a*) appears in our Poem:

I. *as* *a* (except before a nasal *m* or *n*).

O.-F. *raton* — *ratones* pl. pr. 146. pr. 158; *baron* — *barones* pl. pr. 216; *passer* — *passen* inf. pr. 155; *ypassed* past. part. pr. 189; *ariere* — *arrere* V, 354; *chalongier* — *challengen* inf. pr. 93; *clamer* — *clameth* V, 93; *parer* (Latin *parere*) — *peren* (to appear) pr. 173; *fantasie* — *fantasies* pl. pr. 31 (now contracted to *fancy*).

II. *as* *au*, before a nasal consonant (*m* or *n*), as in Norman-French, to express the dull sound of the *a*. In time the original *a* displaced *au* again.

*granter* — *graunte* I, 171; *lance* — *launce* III, 303; *contenance* — *contenaunce* pr. 24; *sergant* — *seriauntes* pl. III, 101; *eschanger* — *eschaunges* pl. V, 249; *comander* — *comaunde* IV, 8; *geant* — *gyaunt* VI, 234; *marcheant* — *marchaunt* IV, 132; *marcheauntz* pl. V, 17. In the C Text we read: *marchans* — *merchauns* X, 41; *lampe* — *laumpe* I, 187; *example* — *ensaumples* pl. IV, 136; *chambre* — *chaumbre* III, 10.

We find *a* reappearing in:

*servant* — *servantz* pl. pr. 95; *penance* — *penance* pr. 25.

**The Old-French *e*** (Latin *e*, *i* or *a*, *ae*)

**e**

I. *remains* *e*.

*hermite* (eremita) — *heremite* pr. 3; *merveillous* (mirabile) — *merveilouse* pr. 11; *plere*, *plesir* (placere) — *plese* pr. 30; *precher* (praecare) — *precheth* pr. 38; *vertu*, *virtud* (virtus) — *vertues* pl. pr. 103; *servir* (servire) — *serven* pr. 92.

pr. 131; *temple* — *temple* I, 47; *regner* — *regneth* II, 53; *cher* (carus) — *chere* IV, 165.

II. *changes into ei (ey)*; the accent which was lost in the final syllable was thrown back to the one preceding, thus causing a length of sound by compensation. *precier* — *preiseth* III, 139. V, 331; *preysed* VI, 110; *preiseden* VII, 38; *percevoir* — *perceyved* pr. 101; C I, 128: *parcevede*; *ordener* — *ordeigned* V, 166; *ordeygned* pr. 119.

III. *becomes a*; this vowel, which we find already used (besides *e*) in unaccented Prefixes of French Verbs, has been adopted in Old-English.

*essaier, assaier* — *assaye* III, 5; *essaillir, assaillir* — *assaille* II, 96; *eschaper* — *ascapen* II, 202; *ascaped* VI, 79.

**i**      **The Old-French i** (Latin *i* or *e*) *appears always as i or y*:

*pris* — *pris* II, 13; *crier* — *crieden* pr. 225; *diner* — *dyne* pr. 226; *deviner* — *devine* pr. 209; *terminer* — *ytermined* I, 97; *cosin* — *cosyn* II, 132.

*The Norman-French termination of Substantives ie (ye)* is still the same in our Poem; it is only in Modern English that it has been replaced by a single *y*:

*glotonie* (gluttony) — *glotonye* pr. 22; *ribaudie* (ribaldry) — *ribaudye* pr. 44; *avulterie* (adultery) — *avoutrie* II, 175; *maistrie* — *maistrye* III, 228. IV, 135; *maistries* pl. IV, 25.

Anomalous forms:

*pitie* (pity) — *pite* II, 219; *mainie* (house-hold) — *meyne* I, 108. III, 24.

**o**      **The Old-French o** (Latin *o*)

I. *usually remains o*:

*fol* — *foles* pr. 35; *gloser* — *glosed* pr. 60; *unglosed* IV, 145; *colier* — *colers* pl. pr. 162; *renom* — *renon* pr. 158; *acombrer* — *acombred* I, 194. I, 201; *ordre* — *ordre* I, 104; *povre* — *povere* sb. pl. I, 173; C has: *povre* I, 80; *pouvoir* — *powere* III, 280; *donjon* — *dongeon* pr. 15.

II. *it changes into ou*

- 1) *at the beginning and in the middle of words, especially before m and n:*

*nombre, nombre — noubre* I, 115; *C — noubre* IV, 349; *nombre* IV, 339; *donter, dunter — daunten* III, 286; *anoncier, anuncier — anounced* I, 189; *honor — honoure* III, 210. VI, 12.

- 2) *at the end of words, answering to the French termination of Substantives on (seldom: un):*

*leçon — lessoun* V, 204; *galon — galoun* V, 224; *profession — professioun* I, 98; *venison — venesoun* pr. 194; *felon — feloun* V, 479; *salvacion, — un, — savacioun* V, 126; *absolucion, — un, — absolucioun* VII, 65.

- 3) *at the end of words, answering to the French substantival termination eor:*

*disor — disoures* pl. VI, 56; *tailleur — taillours* pl. pr. 220; *plaideor — pledoures* pl. VII, 42.

**The Old-French u** (Latin *u, o*) is mostly preserved as *u*:

*suffrir — suffren* pr. 131; *suffre* pr. 205; *user — useth* I, 147; *durer — dureth* I, 78; *jugier — jugge* pr. 130.

*It undergoes alterations in:*

*parfurnir — parfourned* V, 405; *ruban — ribanes* pl. II, 16.

**The Old-French eu** (Latin *o*), sometimes occurring *eu* besides *o*, changes, like *o*, into *ou* in:

*docteur — doctours* pl. pr. 87; *confesseur — confes-soure* IV, 145; *heure, ure — houres* I, 181; The word: *poeple, pueple, peuple*, becomes: *peple* pr. 59. III, 260; *poeple* I, 6. The C Text has *u* — *puple* I, 80.

**The Old-French ou** (Latin *o*) often substituted *ou* for *o* changes in like manner:

*borgois, bourgeois — burgeis* pl. pr. 216; *bocher, boucher — bochere* V, 330. In Text C we read: *bouchers* pl. IV, 80; *poulet — poletes* pl. VI, 282; *souper — soper* VI, 265.

*The termination of Old-French Adjectives* (Modern-French: eux) has been *merely adopted in Old-English*.

**au**     **The Old-French au for al** (Latin *al*) *still appearing in both forms, changes into eu, ew or eo:*

*lealted, loiaute* (comp. Bartsch, *Chrestomathie de l'ancien français*: Glossaire pag. 630) — *leute* pr. 126; *lewte* pr. 122. II, 21.

*roialme, royaume* (Bartsch, pag. 680) — *reumes* pl. I, 95; *reume* sg. pr. 177; the C Text has: *reome* IV, 191; *reame* I, 192.

*au changes into a in:*

*salver, sauver* — *save* pr. 115.

In regard to the above Old-French vowels, expressing the sound of *o* or its modulations (*o, u, eu, ou, au*), we must refer to the Old-French, and principally to the special forms of the Norman-French dialect, where we find them very often employed indiscriminately in the same words. Naturally enough, this uncertainty has been taken over into Old-English, and it is only in course of time that a decided orthography has been settled.

In the same manner the Old-French compound vowels *ai, ei* and even *oi* (formed from the Latin vowels *a, e, oi* with the aid of *i*), show a vacillation which has also been adopted by the Old-English Writers.

Thus:

*maistre* — *maistres* pl. pr. 62; *plaindre, pleindre* — *pleyned* pr. 83; *air* — *eyre* pr. 128; *chainer* — *cheyned* I, 186; *peindre, paindre* — *peynten* III, 62; *conseil* — *conseille* pr. 180; C: *consail* IV, 127; *saint* — *seint* sg. IV, 142; *seynts* pl. pr. 47; *monnaie, monnoie* — *moneie* III, 251; *estreit, estroit* — *streyte* pr. 26; *cortisie, courtoisie* — *curteisye* I, 20; *praiere, proiere* — *prayer* pr. 25; *foi, fei, fai* — *feith* I, 14; *feyth* I, 76; C: *fayþ* V, 13; *croix* — *croys*

VII, 319; The B Text has the anomalous form: *cruche* V, 529.

A softening into *e* takes place:

*pais* — *pees* I, 150; *fraile* — *frele* III, 121; *saison* — *seson* pr. 1; C — *seyson* I, 1; *raison* — *resoun* I, 25; C — *reson* II, 50; *reison* I, 182; *aise* — *ese* pr. 57; *foible*, *faible*, *feible*, *feble* — *feble* pr. 180; but: *fieble* V, 177; *loial*, *leal* — *lelly* adv. I, 78; *lelliche* I, 179; C has: *leelliche* VIII, 208.

The Old-French *ie* (Latin *ia* or *ê*); see under *i*. ie

We add an anomalous form:

*bienfait* — *bymfet* C VIII, 42.

The Old-French *ui* (derived from the Latin *o*) appears still as *ui* (*uy*), seldom as *oy*, which change did not take place as a rule until later times:

*destruire* — *destruyeth* pr. 22; *destruye* pr. 197; *struyeth* (after the *syncope* of the Prefix *de*) VI, 29; *enuier* — *enuye* II, 83; *nuire* — *noyed* II, 20.

The *i* was dropped in:

*fruit* — *frut* sg. V, 141; *frutes* pl. VI, 326.

(In Modern-English *fruit*, the *i* again appears, though it is mute.)

*suiure* — *sueth* IV, 167; *seweth* pr. 45. In the C Text we find: *swoed* IV, 328.

## CONSONANTS.

### A. THE ANGLO-SAXON CONSONANTS.

#### *Liquids.*

l, m, n, r.

**l**     **The A.-S. l is retained as l:**

*litel* — *litel*; *dælan* (distribuere) — *dele* I, 197.

ll *generally remains*, yet sometimes one l is omitted, especially at the end of words:

*tellan* (dicere) — *tellen* pr. 92; *gealla* (bilis) — *galle* V, 119; *stoll* (scabellum) — *stole* V, 394; *befēoll* pret. of *befeallan* (accidere) — *byfol* pr. 6.

l is dropped in:

*hvylic* (qualis) — *whiche* VII, 146; *svilc*, *svylc* (talis) — *suche* VI, 325; C — *swich* I, 64; *ælc* (quisque) — *eche* III, 310; C has sometimes: *uche*.

**m**     **The A.-S. m does not change** in most cases:

*sumor* (aestas) — *somer* pr. 1; *lamb* (agnus) — *lombe* V, 560. From *sum* is derived: *some*, *somme* pr. 20. pr. 31; C I, 25.

Analogous to the Anglo-Saxon, the final *m* is often dropped in the Preposition *fram* — *fra*; *fram* I, 4 *but* — *fro* III, 109. VI, 90.

**n**     **The A.-S. n usually answering to n, has gone out as a sign of Inflection**, where it was substituted for *m* (Dative Plural).

In *eighen* V, 356 and *pesen* VI, 198 it is still retained as a sign of the Plural, comp. Inflection, Plural; where also a number of Substantives will be found in which *n* appears as a mere inorganic addition to form the Plural.

*n* has disappeared in:

*onmang* (among) — *amonges* V, 209; *an* (one) — *a* I, 99 etc. especially before consonants: “and not to fasten a friday.” *biforan* (before) — *bifor* VII, 188; but: *biforn* pr. 183.

*nn* remains in:

*innan* (within) — *inne* VI, 305; *cunman* (scire) — *conneth* pr. 33; *sunne* (sol) — *sonne* pr. 1; *þanne* (tum) — *þanne* VII, 37.

*n* becomes *nn*, causing a shortening of the preceding vowel in:

*linen* (lineus) — *lynnen* pr. 219; *sonest* (soonest) — *sonnest* I, 70.

*n* has been inserted in:

*recan* (to reckon up) — *rekne* I, 22; *blican* (to blink) — *blenche* V, 589.

The A.-S. *r* remains *r*.

**r**

For examples, in which *rr* has proceeded from contraction, see s. v. Inflection, Comparison.

*The Metathesis*, which had already begun to be in use in Anglo-Saxon, extended more and more:

*bryd*, *byrd* (bride; Germ. Brant) — *birde* III, 14; C has: *berde* IV, 5; *brennan*, *bernan* (burn; Germ. brennen) — *brenne* III, 97; *afered* (afraid) — *aferde* VI, 123; *þerscan* (Old - High - German: *driscan*; Germ. dreschen) — *thresche* V, 553; *vyrcan* (operari) — *worche* VI, 120; *wrouzte* pret. VI, 115 (Germ. wirken); *þridda* (third) — (Germ. dritte) — *thridde* pr. 121; *þrittig* (thirty; Germ. dreissig) — *thretti* V, 422: the C Text gives: *þerty* VIII, 30; *þurh* (through; Germ. durch) — *thorwgh* VI, 326; *iren* (ferrum; iron) — *yrens* IV, 85; *yynes* VI, 138.



Further we find *Metathesis* in *unaccented* final syllables :

*forfadres* (A.-S. *fäder*; forefathers) V, 501; *fettren* (A.-S. *feterian*; to fetter) II, 207.

In: *sterres* (stars) VII, 160, the second *r* arose from *n* by Assimilation. The word is derived from the Gothic *stairno* (Germ. Stern).

*The A.-S. r has been dropped in:*

*sprēcān* (to speak) — *speke* pr. 129; *spræc* (speech) — *speche* pr. 52.

*Labials.*

*p, b, f, v.*

**p** *The A.-S. p remains the same* in our Poem.

*Exceptionally we observe the omission of p before s at the beginning of words in:*

*sauter* II, 37; it reappears orthographically in Modern English: *psalter*.

*We find p inserted between m and n in:*

*nemnan* (nominare) — *nempne* I, 21; where it was placed to preserve the preceding *m*. In: *chaffare* pr. 31 (A.-S. *ceáp*; to barter) — *f* arose from *p* by Assimilation.

**b** *The A.-S. b is retained* in *Piers the Plowman*.

*bb is weakened into v in:*

*habban* — *have* VII, 68; yet it remains *bb* in: *lybben* (to live) — *libbyng* pr. 222.

*b is inserted* in the same manner as *p* to preserve a preceding *m*, in: *slumerian* (dormitare) — *slombred* pr. 10.

**f** *The A.-S. f is kept as such* at the beginning and at the end of words, whilst in the middle it requires the support of a following consonant:

*féond* (fiend) — *fende* I, 40; *crāft* (skill) — *craftes* pr. 118; *lif* (life) — *lyf* pr. 155; *āfter* (after) — *after* VII, 4.

*Or it changes into v* between vowels, as well as after a preceding consonant; it was then written *u*.

*grafan* (sculpere) — *grave* IV, 130; *gifan* — *gyve* VII, 197; *lufu* (amor) — *love* pr. 26; *hārfeſt* (auctumnus) — *herveſt* VI, 68; *delfan* (fodere) — *delve* V, 552.

*before m, f changes into m, as already sometimes in Anglo-Saxon:*

*viſman, vimman, vumman* — *womman* I, 71; C has: *womon* X, 167; *leōfman, lēfman* (lover) — *lemman* II, 21; *lemmannes* pl. III, 150.

*f has gone out in:*

*hlāford* — *lorde* III, 229; *hlæfdige* — *lady* V, 72; C: *halpeny* IX, 329.

*we meet it still in:*

*heafod* (Modern-English: head) — *heved* V, 637; C — *hefd* III, 213; *hevedes* pl. VII, 150.

The A.-S. *v* written *w* in *Piers the Plowman*, appears *v* before vowels at the beginning of words:

*verc* (opus) — *workes* pl. pr. 3; *veorold* (mundus) — *world* pr. 4.

*before the liquid r, in which case it became mute and only an orthographic sign in course of time:*

*vraſg pret. of vringan* (to wring) — *wronge* VI, 177; *vraðian* (to enrage) — *wratthe* II, 116.

*v has been dropped* at the beginning of the following words, in which it had arisen by Matethesis from the A.-S. *hv*: *hva* (quis) — *ho* pr. 144; C — *ho* IV, 61; in most instances though we find it spelled *who*; *hwēpan* (clamare) — *houped* VI, 174. In Modern-English the *v* was restored; we write: *who* and *to whoop*.

*A Vocalisation of the v takes place in the following words:*

*treovð* (fides) — *treuthe* I, 12; *hreovðe* (dolor) — *reuthe* IV, 110; *slævð* (desidia) — *sleuthe* pr. 45. V, 441; *cvellan* (necare) — *kullen* I, 65; *kulled* III, 186.

*av has been changed into o in:* *cavl* (caulis) — *koleptantes* pl. VI, 288 (cabbages) (Comp. Germ. Kohl.)

*Linguals.*

t, d, þ, ð, s.

t The A.-S. t remains the same:

*tima* (time) — *tyme* V, 553; *treoveliche* (truly) — *trewlich* VII, 63; *gitan* (gignere) — *gete* pr. 215; *hat* (*calidus*) — *hote* pr. 225.

t t is found instead of the A.-S. t in:

*betera* (melius) — *better* I, 8.

t is replaced by d in:

*prût* (superbus) — *proude* V, 63; *prÿta* (superbia) — *pruyde* pr. 22.

d The A.-S. d

I. appears as d at the beginning of words:

*dician* (fossare) — *dyke* V, 552; *drifan* (agere) — *dryven* pr. 224 etc.

II. remains still d in Piers the Plowman in the middle of words, between vowels. In Modern-English this *d* changed into *th*:

*hider* (hitherwards) — *hiderward* VI, 322; *modor* (mother) — *moder* II, 49; *fäder* (father) — *fader* I, 14; *veder* (weather) — *wederes* VI, 326.

III. is d in the middle and at the end of words, supported by a preceding consonant:

*scendan* (confundere) — *schenden* II, 125; *vandrian* (iterare) — *wandryng* pr. 19; *zeldan* (solvere) — *zelding* II, 104; *gyrd* (yard) — *zerdes* pl. V, 214; *feónd* (hostis) — *fende* I, 40.

The Reduplication of d, causing a shortening of the preceding vowel, takes place in:

*bidde* V, 231; *sadder* Comparative of *sad* V, 4; *ladde* pret. of *lædan* (to lead) pr. 112. In the C Text I, 58 *godspel* retains the *d* still, whilst it is already dropped in *gospel* pr. 60 (B Text). In *gossib* V, 310, the *d* was displaced by *s* from Assimilation. For the same reason we have *pynned* (penned in) from *pyndan* (A.-S.) V, 213.

*As regards the change of d into t in Weak Verbs, comp. s. v. Inflection, Weak Conj. — Observations.*

**The A.-S. ð, þ.**

ð, þ

In our Poem we generally find *th* to denote the sharp and *þ* to denote the soft sound.

*ð is replaced by d in:*

*quod* pr. 160 (comp. Anglo-Saxon Vowels *ä*; III) (*quoth*) besides, *quoth*.

*cude* pret. of *cunnan* — *coude* pr. 129; besides, *couthe* I, 115 (comp. Inflection under Preterite-Presents).

*In Contractions* *þ* becomes *t* when a *t* precedes: at *þe* — *atte*.

and *mete atte mele* (at the meal) I, 24; and *fouzten atte ale* (at the ale) pr. 42. Similar examples will be found under: Inflection, Demonstrative Pronouns I. — In the Personal Pronoun *þow*, affixed to the verb, *þ* changes into *t* (comp. s. v. Inflection, Conjugation, Present).

The words:

*wraththe* (wrath) V, 435; *wrattheth* pr. 175; *kitthe* (region) III, 205, are signs of a corrupted spelling.

**The A.-S. *s* is represented by *s* at the beginning and at the end of words:**

*sumor* (aestas) — *somer* pr. 1; *sverian* (jurare) — *swere* VII, 21; *mys* (mice) — *mys* pr. 147; *sveord* (gladius) — *swerde* I, 103.

*In the middle of words it is *s* or *ss*:*

*bysig* (industrius) — *bisi* I, 6; *visian* (monstrare) — *wissen* V, 540 (Germ. *weisen*); *ss* is often used for a simple *s* and vice versâ.

*mässe* (mass) — *messe* pr. 97; *bliss* (bliss) — *blisful* II, 3.

**The A.-S. consonantal combination *sc* appears I. as *sh*:**

*sceall* (shall) — *shal* I, 2; *sceamu* (ignominia) — *shame* IV, 30; *sceavian* (monstrare) — *shawe* pr. 106; *scumian* (evitare) — *shonyeth* V, 169; *scrifan* (scribere) — *shryve* pr. 64.

## II. as sch:

*scendan* (confundere) — *schenden* II, 125; *flæsc* (caro) — *flesch* I, 10

## III. as sk:

*sceap* (forma) — *skape* IV, 79.

A *Metathesis* of the *sc* takes place in: *ascian*, *acsian*, *axian* (interrogare) — *axeth* I, 36; besides, *asketh* pr. 19.

*Gutturals.*

c (ch), g, h.

c The A.-S. c is subject to several alterations.

I. *it remains as guttural c (k) at the beginning of words:*

1) *before the dull vowels: a, o; u.*

*cann* from *cunnan* (scire) — *can* III, 3; *cuman* (venire) — *comen* VII, 188; *cuma* — *comeres* II, 230.

2) *before the consonants: l, n, r.*

*clūt* (clout) — *cloutes* II, 230; *clavian* (to claw) — *clowe* pr. 154; *cneo* (genu) — *knees* pl. II, 1; *cnafa* (puer) — *knave* IV, 16; *crāft* (vis) — *craft* I, 137; *croft* (croft) — *croft* V, 581.

3) *in the consonantal combination cv (kv, qu):*

*cvellan* (necare) — *kullen* I, 66; *cvāð* (dixit) — *quod* pr. 160.

II. *it softens into ch at the commencement of words*

1) *before the clear vowels ê, î:*

*cêse* (cheese) — *chese* V, 93; *cêle* (chill) — *chele* I, 23; *cīdan* (to chide) — *chiden* I, 191; *cīld* (child) — *childe* I, 178.

*Observation.*

This change only occurs when the above-mentioned vowels have not arisen from an original *ā, ô, ū* through

Modification, in which last case the *c* remains guttural; thus: *cyng* (rex) — *kyng* II, 10.

Exceptionally we have the form:

*cyrice* — *cherche* I, 75; as *y* arose from *û* through modification (Umlaut); (comp. Koch, histor. Gramm. I, pag. 129.)

2) before the compound vowels: *ea* and *eo*:

*ceápmōn* (mercator) — *chapman* pr. 64; *ceosan* (eligere) — *chosen* IV, 56.

III. In the middle of words we find sometimes *c*, sometimes *ch*; no decided principle has been followed in the use of either. A few examples will show this:

*macian* — *make* III, 279; *mycel* (magnus) — *mykel* pr. 201; *moche* IV, 62; *C* has *muchel* VII, 374; *freca* (a bold man) — *freke* IV, 12; *tæcan* (docere) — *teche* I, 83; *vyrcean* (laborare) — *worchyng* pr. 19.

#### IV. The final *c*

1) remains as guttural *c*; in course of time an inorganic *e* has been added:

*clerc* — *clerke* VII, 73; *clerkes* pl. pr. 116; *folc* (populus) — *folke* I, 2; *coc* (coquus, Germ. Koch) — *cokes* pl. pr. 225.

2) changes into *ch* in:

*ric* — *riche* pr. 18; *spæc* — *speech* pr. 54; besides, in the termination of Adverbs *lice* — *lich*.

For examples see under: Inflection, Adverbs.

V. The *c* has been dropped in the Personal Pronoun *ic* — *I*, which already appears thus in *Piers the Plowman*, although the forms: *Ich*, *ik*, frequently occur in both Texts.

VI. *cc* is often written *kk*:

*sæcc* (saccus) — *sakke* VI, 9; *þicce* — *þikke* (thickly) III, 156.

The Reduplication is also given by *cc*h:

*bicce* (bitch) — *bicche* V, 353; *læccan* (to clutch) — *lacchyng* I, 101; *feccan* (to fetch) — *fecche* II, 180.

VII. *the A.-S. cg becomes gg by Assimilation:*

*bycgan* (emere) — *bugge* pr. 168; *licgan* (jacere) — *liggen* pr. 91; *secgan* (dicere) — *segge* V, 617 (abbreviated to: *sey* pr. 52); *brycg* (pons) — *brugge* V, 601; *secg* (vir) — *segges* pl. pr. 160.

**ch** The double consonant **ch** was unknown in Anglo-Saxon and became introduced later, to mark the sound of the softened *c*; yet it was also used as a sign for the guttural *c*, merely from a tendency to represent the etymology of the word.

**g** The A.-S. **g**

I. *at the beginning of words*

1) *appears as guttural g:*

*guma* (vir) — *gome* V, 541; *gamen* (ludus) — *gamen* pr. 153; *gripan* — *gripeth* (to clutch) III, 248.

2) *softens to 3*, from which it becomes gradually vocalised:

*ger* (year) — *zere* pr. 189; *gyrn* (desirous) — *3erne* I, 35; *geong* (young) — *3onge* III, 213; *gelic* (alike) — *ilyke* I, 50; *genog* (enough) — *ynowe* II, 143; *gemang* (among) — *amonge* pr. 196; *gif* (if) — *3if*.

To this class of words also belong the Past Participles in which the A.-S. Prefix *ge* is changed into *y*; comp. s. v. Inflection.

II. *in the middle of words, it*

1) *is retained* after a supporting consonant or in the Reduplication, arisen from *cg* (comp. c. VII):

*hungor* (Germ. Hunger) — *hunger* V, 388.

2) *is softened into w* (*w*, *v*, *u*):

*lagu* (lex) — *lawe* pr. 212; *vagian* (ire) — *wawe* VII, 79; *fugel* (avis) — *foules* pl. VII, 124; *dragan* (trahere) — *drawen* VII, 56; *morgen* (morrow) — *morwe* II, 43; *fylgan* (sequi) — *folweth* I, 40.

3) *is softened to 3 and vocalised:*

*eage* (oculus) — *eizen* pl. V, 396; *fäger* (pulcher) — *faire* I, 4; *fügen* (laetus) — *faine* II, 77; *tvegen* (duo) — *tweyne* V, 31; *mägdēn* (maiden) — *maydenes* pl. II, 43; *eglan* (dolere) — *cyleth* VI, 129.

4) *is dropped in:*

*lengten, lencten* (Lent) — *lenten* pr. 91.

III. *at the end of words, is vocalised in most cases:*

*veg* (via) — *wey* pr. 48; *lāg* pret. of *licgan* (jacere) — *lay* pr. 9. This change applies as well to Adjectives, terminating in *ig* (in Modern English *y*):

*bysig* (busy) — *bisi* I, 6; *sarig* (sorry) — *sari* pr. 45; *verig* (weary) — *wery* pr. 7.

The A.-S. **h**

**h**

I. *is retained, initially before vowels:*

*hærm* (harm) — *harmes* pl. IV, 30; *he* pers. pr.; *hina* (servant) — *hyne* pr. 39.

II. *disappears before the consonants l, n, r* (a vacillation began already to take place in Anglo-Saxon):

*hlaf* (loaf) — *lof* VI, 181; *hleápan* (to leap) — *lepe* II, 231; *hrapan* (festinare) — *rape* IV. 7.

III. *undergoes Metathesis, when it appears in A.-S. as hw* (comp. *v*):

*hwa* — *who*; *hvanne* — *whan*; *hwilc* — *which*; *hwät* — *what*.

IV. *goes out at the end in:*

*feoh* (pecunia) — *fees* pl. V, 590; *seolh* (phoca) — *seel* pr. 79.

V. *The A.-S. h was changed into 3 or gh, especially in the middle of words, followed by the consonant t:*

*dohtor* — *dou3ter* II, 30; C has still *douhter* VII, 134; *dyhtig* (validus) — *dau3tier* Comparative V, 102; *sah3lian* (reconciliare) — *sau3tne* IV, 2; *feohtan* (dimicare) — *fy3te*



IV, 52; *riht* — *rihtful* pr. 127; *siht* — *syzt* pr. 32; *sight* pr. 16.

*In a few instances h undergoes this change also at the end:*

*nēh*, *neāh* (prope) — *nei3e* III, 144; *heāh* (altus) — *hiegh* pr. 13. In the C-Text we find *hy* VI, 187; *beāh* — *bei3* (neck-ring) pr. 161.

VI. *h is hardened to kk in:*

*leāhan* (vituperare) — *lakke* V, 132; *ylakked* II, 21.

C has: *lackyd* III, 21.

*hh becomes gh in:*

*hleghan* (ridere) — *laughen* IV, 106. C. VII, 23: *lauhyng*; to *lauhe* VII, 194.

*hs (chs) appears as x in:*

*būhsom* (flexibilis) — *buxome* I, 110.

VII. *after r the final h very often changes into w:*

*furh* (furrows) — *forwes* pl. VI, 106 (comp., Germ. *Furche*); *sorh* (sorrow) — *sorwe* II, 120 (Germ. *Sorge*).

With regard to the Text-C we observe that the A.-S. *h* is still retained in the Personal Pronoun *hit*; whilst in the B-Text it invariably appears as: *it*.

## B. THE FRENCH CONSONANTS.

### *Liquids.*

*l, m, n, r.*

1 The Old-French *l, ll* usually do not alter in our Poem; although sometimes we find them used interchangeably:

*fol* — *foles* pr. 35; *apareillier* — *apparailed* pr. 23; *merveillous* — *merveilouse* pr. 11; C has *merveylously* I, 9; *conseil* — *conseille* pr. 180; C — *consail* I, 167.

We will add a few deviations:

*l* vocalises in *coupe* V, 305 (Lat. *culpa*) (comp. French: *coupable*); *malgré* — *maugre* II, 204. — The final *l* changes into *r* in: *autel* — *auter* V, 109.

**The Old-French *m* and *n***, often used interchange- ***m, n*** ably, produced a like vacillation in *Piers the Plowman*:

*comander* — *comaunde* IV, 8; *conte, comte* — *counte* II, 85; *donter, dompter* — *daunteth* III, 286; *confort* — *confort* I, 201; *nonper* — *noumpere* (umpire) V, 337.

#### *Exceptions.*

We find a *g* inserted before *n* in:

*ordener* — *ordeygned* pr. 119; *soverain* — *sovereygne* pr. 159.

*n* is ommitted in the Prefix *con* in:

*convant* (conventus) — *covent* V, 155.

**The Old-French *r* undergoes Metathesis** in accented and unaccented syllables:

*torser* — *trusse* II, 218; *grenier* — *gernere* VII, 199; *lettre* VII, 199; *lettre* VII, 23; *propre* VII, 148.

In the French terminations of verbs, the *r* is dropped, as for instance:

*descrire* — *descryve* V, 188.

*In the French Inchoative Verbs* (derived from the Latin verbs in — *escere*, comp. A. Brachet, *Grammaire historique* p. 200), the *r* is always changed into *s*, *sh* in Old-English; in Modern English these verbs terminate in *ish*.

*cherir* (to cherish) — *cherissyng* IV, 117; *ravir* (to ravish) — *ravysshed* II, 17; *punir* (to punish) — *punischen* II, 48.

#### *Labials.*

*p, b, f, v.*

**The Old-French *p* does not alter.**

We give one form, where it has been dropped: *cor-* ***p*** *seint* V, 539 (a holy body). — In *dampne* V, 478 (O. Fr. *dampner*) the *p* is still retained; now we have: *to condemn*.

In the formation of the Plural, *p* is redoubled: *coupe* — *coppis* (cups) III, 22.

**b** The Old-French *b* has also been introduced as such into English; though it changes as initial *b* into *p* in: *borse* — *purse* V, 192. A contraction we meet in *caplus* pl. II, 161 (Latin *caballus*).

**f** The Old-French *f*, changes sometimes with *ff* in the middle of words: *afaitier* — *affaiten* V, 37; *deffier* — *defye* V, 121; *fiefer* — *seffe* II, 146.

**v** The Old-French *v* appears written as:

*u*, *v*, *w*.

*pouvoir* — *powere* III, 280; *sauver* — *save* pr. 115; *covrir* — *kevre* VI, 106.

*v* has been omitted in: *pore* pr. 84, yet we find *povere*, the full form, I, 173. The uncertainty in the spelling of this word in Old-French *poure*, *poire*, *povre*, *pauvre* has thus merely been adopted.

*Linguals.*

*t*, *d*, *s*, *z*.

**t** The Old-French *t* is given by *c* when it denotes a sibilant:

*salvatiun* — *sauvacioun* V, 126; *absolution* — *absolucioun* VII, 65.

In all other instances it remains *t*.

**d** The Old-French *d* is sometimes dropped, in which case a preceding vowel is lengthened by compensation:

*plaindre* — *pleyned* pr. 83 (to complain); *poids* — *peys* V, 243; *guider*, *guier* — *gyed* II, 187.

**s, z** The Old-French *s* is always represented by *s* in *Piers the Plowman*:

*saison* — *seson* pr. 1; *prisier* — *preiseth* III, 139; *pais* — *pees* I, 150; *fantasie* — *fantasies* pl. pr. 35; *despendre* — *despended* V, 267; *pousser* — *possed* pr. 151.

*For s we find ss in:*

*espier* — *asspye* VI. 131.

A contracted form from *resonable* is *renable* pr. 158.

*sch* is mostly written *sc*:

*eschaper* — *ascapen* II, 202; Latin *schola* — *scole*

VII, 31.

About the *s* in Old-French Inchoative Verbs, comp. *r*.

Examples for *s*, *z* in the Plural will be found under Plural VIII (Inflection).

*Gutturals.*

*c*, *ch*.

**The Old-French *c***

***c***

I. *remains as such* and keeps its guttural sound:

1) *as initial c* (*k*) before consonants and dull vowels:

*clamer* — *clameþ* I, 93; *corone* — *corone* II, 10; *cabane* — *kaban* III, 190.

2) *in the middle of words*:

*recroire* — *recrayed* Past Part. III, 257; *secret* — *secret* VII, 23; *delicat* — *delicately* adv. V, 184.

II. *c remains c or changes into s, ss*, expressing the sibilant before clear vowels:

*cesser* — *cesse* VI, 181; *certes* — *certis* II, 151; *piece* — *peces* pl. III, 89; *service* — *servise* II, 142; *divorce* — *devorses* pl. II, 175; *lecon* — *lessoun* V, 204.

**The Old-French *ch***, arisen from *c*, *remains ch* at the beginning and in the middle of words:

*chevir* — *cheven* pr. 31; *charite* — *charite* I, 186; *chastier* — *chaste* VI, 53; *precher* — *precheth* pr. 38.

*cch* occurs in:

*cachier* (to catch) — *cacche* pr. 206; *huche* (hutch) — *hucche* IV, 116.

**The Old-French *qu*** appears as *k*:

***qu***

*liquereux* — *likeraus* pr. 30; *piquois* (pickaxe) — *pykois* III, 307; *cliquet* — *cliket* V, 613.

**g The Old-French g****I. *is retained* in Piers the Plowman:**

1) as *guttural* g before consonants and dull vowels:  
*gloton* — *glotoun* VI, 303; *grever* — *greve* pr. 153;  
*galon* — *galoun* V, 224.

2) as *palatal* g before clear vowels:

*sage* — *sage* III, 93; *geant* — *gyaunt* VI, 234; *clergie* — *clergie* pr. 116; *bourgoise* — *burgeis* sb. fem. pr. 216.

**II. *g undergoes the following alterations*:**

1) the *guttural* g, arisen from the German *w*, becomes *w* again:

*gage*, *guage* — *wage* IV, 97; *gastel* (cake) — *wastel* V, 293; *guichet* (wicket-gate) — *wiket* V, 611; *guernart* (deceiver) — *werhardes* pl. II, 129; *guaignier* (to gain) — *wayne* V, 611; *garene*, *warene* (warren) — *wareine* pr. 163. From *guaster* (vastare) we have the substantive *wastours* pl. pr. 22 (comp. Diez, Gramm. der rom. Spr. p. 230; Scheller, Dictionaire étymol. p. 153).

2) The vacillation, which we observe in Old-French respecting the *palatal* g, which in the middle of words was sometimes omitted, has been adopted in Old-English:

*deiner*, *deyner*, *daignier* — *deyned* Pret. pl. VI, 310; soon after: *deigned*; *montaigne* — *montaigne* (now *mountain*). C has *montayne* II, 1. For examples, in which g has been inserted after *n*, see under *n*.

**j The Old-French j has been preserved in Piers the Plowman:**

*jugier* — *jugge* II, 94; *justice* — *justice* VII, 44; *jangleur* — *jangler* pr. 35.

**h The Old-French h has been generally retained in the B Text, whilst in Text C we occasionally meet with words, where it has been left out.**

We will give but a few examples:

*habite* B pr. 3; *Abit* C I, 3; *heremite* B pr. 3; *er-mite* C I, 3; *hermyte* VII, 368.

Further:

*houres* pl. appears in Text B I, 181; as well as in Text C; besides we find *oures* in Text B pr. 97.

## INFLECTION.

### DECLENSION.

In our Poem, the difference which we observe in Anglo-Saxon between the Strong and Weak Declension has almost quite disappeared with the exception of a few instances still remaining.

In the Cases the relation between nouns is more and more frequently expressed by Prepositions.

#### *Singular.*

##### Case.

The Nominative and Accusative are alike.

The Genitive is expressed by the preposition *of* or by adding a termination to the noun.

I. Masculine and neuter nouns take the termination *is* or *es*:

*Under a brode banke bi a bornes side* pr. 8. — *That dorst have ybounden þe belle aboute þe cattis nekke* pr. 178. — *Ne hangen it aboute þe cattles hals* pr. 179. — *To greden after goddis men* III, 71. — *And breketh up my bern es dore* IV, 57.

II. Feminine nouns in a few cases retain the A.-S. *e*:

*Kynges courte and commune courte* III, 318. — *þei ne gyveth nouzte of god one go se wynges* IV, 36. — *For al conscience caste* (device) — or *craft as I trowe* III, 18.

Exceptionally a Genitive of a neuter noun occurs with the termination *e*:

*In hope for to have heveneriche blisse* pr. 27.

The Dative is mostly expressed by the preposition *to* or by the addition of *e* to the noun.

*eyre* pr. 128; *hevene* pr. 127; *bourne* V, 140; *hatte* V, 536 (but: *hatt* V, 527).

### *Plural.*

The formation of the Plural shows various changes.

I. *s* is added to nouns ending in a liquid or vowel:

*taillours* pr. 220; *taverners* pr. 227; *masons and mynours* pr. 221; *knees* I, 79; *keyes* V, 529.

II. In most other cases the formation of the Plural takes place by the addition of *es* (sometimes *is*) to the Singular:

*synnes* IV, 133; *a dozeine chickenes* IV, 37; *kynges and kniztes* I, 94; *And þere gat in glotonye gerlis þat were cherlis* (but *cherles* VI, 50); — *many ferlis han fallen* pr. 65. Text C: *3e fynden wel in bokis* IV, 59.

Words, terminating in *y* with a preceding consonant, sometimes keep the *y*, sometimes change it into *i* before the addition of the sign of the Plural *es*:

*ladies* IV, 114; *ladyes* pr. 95; *stories* VII, 73; *lobyes* pr. 55; C — *beries* III, 28.

Words, terminating in the Singular in *f*, preceded by a long vowel, change *f* into *v* and take *es* in the Plural:

*wyf* sg. VI, 89; *wyves* pl. VI, 13; *staf* sg. VI, 105; *staves* pl. V, 28; *lof* sg. VI, 181; *loves* pl. VI, 285; *lyf* sg. VII, 97; *lyves* pl. VII, 87; C — *wolves* X, 226 etc.

III. The termination *us* for *es* very seldom occurs in the B Text, it appears though frequently in the C Text, a peculiarity of the Western dialect (comp. s. v. Introduction, Texts).

Examples from B:

*Ac þanne cared þei for caplus* (horses) *to kairen hem þider* II, 161; *And favel fette forth þanne folus* (foals) *ynowe* II, 162.

The C Text has besides:

*workus* V, 80; *clerkus* I, 141.

IV. Some words which end in *r* in the Singular, add *e* to form their Plural:

*fyfty wyntre* III, 39; *sevene zere* pr. 189. V, 208; but we read *a fewe zeris* pr. 65.

V. A small number of nouns form their Plural by adding *n*. In:

*sustren* V, 627; *bretheren* V, 180. VI, 210; *children* pr. 35; *chylderen* VI, 99; *foon* V, 96 — this final *n* is an inorganic addition; as these words originally form their Plural in a vowel; viz., *sveostra*; *brodru* or *broðra*; *cildru*; *fâ* — whilst: *eighen* V, 536 <sup>1)</sup>; and *pesen* VI, 198; are formed like the A.-S. Plurals: *eágan* and *pisan*. — Exceptionally we find: *peses* VI, 189; C — IX, 307. Once we meet in the C Text with the irregular form: *womben* IV, 83; every where else: *wombes*.

VI. The following words form their Plural in the same manner as in Anglo-Saxon; viz. by *modifying* the Radical Vowel, an alteration which the German Grammarians call "Umlaut".

*gos* sg. IV, 36 (*gôs*); *gees* pl. VI, 283 (*gês*); C has *goos* pl. I, 227; *gees* pl. V, 49; *lous* sg. V, 198 (*lús*); *lys* pl. V, 197 (*lÿs*); *mous* sg. pr. 201 (*mús*) *mys* pl. pr. 147 (*mys*); *man* sg. pr. 122 (*mann*); *men* pl. pr. 129 (*menn*); *womman* I, 71; *women* VII, 90.

exceptionally:

*lemman* sg. II, 21; *lemmannes* pl. III, 150.

1) Shakspeare still writes *eyne*:

"For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's *eyne*"

A Midsummer-Night's Dream I, 1, 243.

comp. besides: Taming of the Shrew V, 1.



VII. Words of a collective sense do not take the sign of the Plural:

*in syx score dayes* III, 145; *a faire felde ful of folke* pr. 17.

VIII. Nouns of French origin have their Plural in *s* (*es*, *is*) or *z*:

*batailles* III, 321; *ensaumples* IV, 136; *fauntes* VII, 94; *fauntis* VI, 285; *servantes* V, 183; but: *servauntz* III, 216; *seriauntz* pr. 211; *marcauntz* VII, 18.

#### Case.

The Nominative and Accusative have the same form.

The Genitive is expressed:

I. by Position, viz. the Possessive precedes the word, to which it relates:

*Tyl bisshopes baiardes ben beggeres chambres* IV, 124; *And til prechoures prechyng be preved on hem-selven* IV, 122.

II. by retaining the A.-S. form (— *ena*) which appears as (— *ene*) or: losing the final *e* as (— *en*):

*But criste kingene kynge* I, 105.

*fro þe wyven pyne* V, 29; *with Iewen silver* I, 67; *Til clerken coveitise be to clothe þe pore* IV, 119; C — *knavene werkes* VI, 54.

III. by adding the termination *es*:

*to blame mennes ware* V, 130.

The Dative which ends in A.-S. in (— *um*) has lost all signs of this inflection and only possesses the common termination of the Plural.

## ADJECTIVES.

The Adjectives, adopting the Anglo-Saxon method of inflection show “*t w o*” forms, a definite and an indefinite;

the former is used, when the Adjective is preceded by the definite article, by any other demonstrative, or by a possessive pronoun; the latter, in all other instances (comp. the change of the Adjective in German). — In the 1<sup>st</sup> form the Adjective terminates in *e* in all cases, whilst in the 2<sup>nd</sup> it ought to be wholly destitute of Inflection. However, this distinction has not been fully carried out, owing either to the irregularity of the rhythm or to the negligence of the scribe.

The Plural of monosyllabic Adjectives mostly ends in *e*:  
*hote pies* pr. 225; *gode gris and gees* pr. 226; *grete lobbyes and longe* pr. 55; *smale mys* pr. 147; *dere children* VI, 99.

· Dissyllabic Adjectives remain unchanged in the Plural.

Adjectives used substantively undergo the same alterations:

*þe mene and þe riche* pr. 18.

Adjectives of French origin form their Plural in *s*:  
*pryves* II, 177; *cardinales* pr. 104.

## COMPARISON.

I. The Comparative and Superlative Degrees are regularly formed by adding *er* and *est* to the Positive Stem:

*lowe* VII, 104; *lower* VII, 158; — *riche* V, 211; *rycher* C III, 14; *richest* III, 207; — *rathe* III, 73; *rather* IV, 5; *rathest* V, 342.

The C Text sometimes offers *ur* instead of *er*:

*hardur* II, 188; *hongryour* II, 188.

A few Adjectives, ending in *d*, double the *d* in the Comparative:

*gladder* V, 92; *sadder* V, 4.

Comparison formed by *Contraction* besides the addition of *er*, *est*:

*dere* VI, 99; *derrer*; *derrest* II, 13.

Adjectives in *y* change this *y* into *i* before the terminations of the Comparison:

*nedy* VII, 71; *nediest* VII, 72; — *dou3ty*; *dou3tier* V, 102; *dou3tiest* V, 508.

Comparisons, formed by the Modification of the Radical Vowel are found in:

*further* II, 201; *ferther* V, 6; *ferthest* V, 239; — *longe* V, 82; *lenger* III, 336.

## II. Irregular Comparison.

The irregular Comparison of the following Adjectives has been entirely adopted from the Anglo-Saxon:

1) *mykel* V, 477; *moche* IV, 62 (*mycel*); *more* IV, 105; C — *meyre* IV, 77 (*mare*); *mo* (adv.) I, 115; *moo* VII, 95 (*ma*); *most* pr. 67 (*mæst*).

2) *good* VII, 64 (*god*); *bettere* V, 45; *bettre* V, 48 (*betere*); *bette* (adv.) V, 601 (*bet*); *best* VI, 89 (*betost*, *betst*).

3) *litel* VII, 131 (*lytel*); *lasse* VI, 170. II, 45 (*lässe*); *lesse* (adv.) V, 224 (*lās*); *leste* II, 196; C — *leest* IV, 210; *lest* IV, 248 (*läst*).

4) *yvel* V, 165 (*yfel*); *worse* V, 114; C — *worsse* IV, 137 (*vyrse*); *werse* I, 26 (adv.) (*vyrs.*); C — *werst* VII, 261 (*vyrrrest*, *vyrst*).

5) *heighe* VI, 4 (*heáh*); *herre* II, 28 (*hyrre*).

6) *neige* III, 144 (*neáh*); *nexte* I, 202 (*nyghst*).

The paraphrase with *more* and *most* instead of the Comparison by Inflection occurs occasionally:

*That were more nedi þan he* VII, 72; *most renable of tonge* pr. 158; *moste liche* V, 489.

## PRONOUNS.

### THE PERSONAL PRONOUNS.

In our Poem there are no instances of the use of the Dual, which was sometimes still retained in Old-English.

*Singular.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> person Nominative (A.-S. *ic*) is nearly always the same as now in Text B; viz. I; now and then we find different forms:

*ik* V, 228; *ich* V, 262.

In the C Text we mostly meet with *ich*; *y* I, 2.

The Genitive (A.-S. *min*) is *mi* (*my*); *min* (*myn*).

The Dative and Accusative (A.-S. *me*) — *me*.

*Plural.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> person Nominative (A.-S. *we*) is *we*.

The Genitive (A.-S. *oure*) is *owre*.

The Dative and Accusative (A.-S. *us*) — *us*; sometimes *ous*, *ows* in Text C:

*As Mathew us techeth* III, 250; *And bihyzte to hym þat us alle made* V, 65.

*Singular.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person Nominative (A.-S. *þu*) — *þow*.

The Genitive (A.-S. *þin*) — *þi* (*þy*); *þin* (*þyn*).

The Dative and Accusative (A.-S. *þe*) — *þe*:  
*folweth þe togidere* I, 40; *3if he wilneth þe to wyf*  
III, 110.

*Plural.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person Nominative (A.-S. *3e*) has the form *3e* in the B Text; *3e* and *3ou* IX, 39 in the C Text.

The Genitive (A.-S. *eover*) — *3owre*.

The Dative and Accusative (A.-S. *eóv*) *3ow*:

*I lere 3ow* III, 69; *nere þat cat of þat courte þat can 3ow overlepe* pr. 199.

*Singular.*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> person Masculine always appears as: *he* (A.-S. *he*) in the Nominative.

The Genitive (A.-S. *his*) — *his*. C — *hus*.

The Dative (A.-S. *him*) and Accusative (A.-S. *hine*) — *him*; *hym*:

to suffre with hym peynes II, 105; as conscience hym kenned IV, 33.

In the Feminine, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person is usually *she* in the Nominative in Text B (A.-S. *heo*) occasionally we read *heo*:

ar *heo* þannes 3ode I, 73; *Hendeliche heo* þanne bihight hem þe same III, 29; *Largenesse þe lady heo* let in ful manye V, 632.

On the whole, there is a great diversity in the form of this pronoun (comp. in the different MSS. Preface III to Text C pag. IXXIV.) Text C generally has *hue*; other Texts have *heo*, *scheo*, 30. We even meet once with *he* in Text B: *It is a kynde knowyng, quod he, þat kenneth in þine herte* 1, 140; where "Holy - Church" is the speaker; comp. *a loveli ladi of lere* I, 3.

The Genitive (A.-S. *hire*) is *hir*; C — *hur*.

The Dative (A.-S. *hire*) and Accusative (A.-S. *hi*) are *hir*; C — *hur*:

and asked *hir* pr. 73; *platte hir to þe erthe* V, 63.

In the Neuter the 3<sup>rd</sup> person Nom. has the form: *it* (A.-S. *hit*) in the B Text; whilst Text C always gives: *hit*.

The Genitive (A.-S. *his*) is *his*; C — *hus*.

The Dative (A.-S. *him*) and Accusative (A.-S. *hit*) are *it* in B; *hit* in C.

### *Plural.*

The Plural is the same for all three Genders.

In the Nominative (A.-S. *hi*) we meet with different forms; mostly we find: *þei*, *they*, or *þai* C II, 6; but in a few examples still *hij*:

*In glotonye gon hij to bedde* pr. 43; *þat hij don ille* V, 114.

The Genitive (A.-S. *heora*, *hira*) is *her*, *here*; C — *hure*: *her eyther had kulled other* V, 165; *þis is here last ende* II, 100.

The Dative (A.-S. *heom*, *him*) and Accusative (A.-S. *hi*) is always given by *hem*:

*That gyle with his grete othes gaf hem togidere* II, 69;  
*There-with was perkyn apayed and preysed hem faste* VI,  
 110; *I bated hem on þe bakke* III, 198.

To lay a stress upon the Personal Pronoun, the Adjective *self* (A.-S. *silfa*), declined and agreeing with it, is joined to the simple Pronoun:

*I my-self and my sones seche þe for nede* VII, 163;  
*There þi-self ne þi sone no sorwe in deth feledest* V, 497;  
*god hym-self hoteth The be boxome at his biddynge* III,  
 262; *þat 3e prechen to þe peple preve it on 3owre-selven* V,  
 43; *And medeth men hem selven to meyntene here lawes*  
 III, 215.

Anomalous:

*þe comune shulde hem-self* (pl.) *fynde* pr. 117.

Sometimes we find the Adjective *self* simply connected with a Noun without the aid of the Personal Pronoun:

*Love is leche of lyf and nexte owre lorde selve* I, 202.

As in Anglo-Saxon, there is no reflexive Pronoun; the Personal Pronoun is used instead<sup>1</sup>):

*I shope me in shroudes* pr. 2; *Peronelle proude herte platte hir to þe erthe* V, 63; *Some putten hem to þe plow* pr. 20; *Many curatoures kepen hem clene of here bodies* I, 193.

## THE POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS.

They are formed from the Genitives of the Personal Pronoun.

In the Singular they are: *min*, *þin* (for the 1<sup>st</sup> and

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1) The use of this was even retained until the Elizabethan time. We read in Shakspere;

"How she opposes her (sets herself) against my will".

Two Gentlemen of Verona III, 2. 26. comp. Abbot, Shakespearian Grammar Par. 223.

2<sup>nd</sup> Persons) with words which were originally Masculine and Neuter, whilst with Feminines, and in the Plural they take an *e* at the end: *mine*, *þine*. They are used both attributively and predicatively. Before consonants, except *h*, *min* and *þin* are generally replaced by *mi* (*my*) and *þi* (*py*) — (*þin herte* I, 41).

The Plural forms are: *owre* and *þowre*. —

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> person Singular, we find in the Masculine and Neuter: *his* (*hise*); C — *hus* (*huse*); in the Feminine: *hir* (*hire*); C — *hur* (*hure*).

The form *its* does not appear until in Modern-English.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> person Plural is given by: *here*; C — *hure* besides *here*.

## THE DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS.

I. The A.-S. *þe*, originally the indeclinable form for the Demonstrative Pronoun *se*, *seo*, *þæt* remained as *þe* for the Definite Article. The following expressions:

*atten ale* for: *at þen ale*; *atten ende* for: *at þe ende* remind us still of the A.-S. Dative *þam*.

Contractions with the Definite Article are not rare; for examples see under: Consonants, *þ*.

II. The Demonstrative Singular *þat*, Plural *þo* (a corrupted form for *þa*) derives its origin from the same Anglo-Saxon Pronoun:

*þat* (sg.) V, 127; IV, 92 etc. *Arne none nedful but þo* (pl.) I, 21. *To attache þo tyrauntz for eny thyng, I hote* II, 199; *For-þi, resoun, lete hem ride, þo riche bi hemselven* IV, 40. —

III. From the A.-S. Demonstrative *þes*, *þeos*, *þis* (sg.) *þus* (pl.) is derived: *þis* in the Singular: *þis day* IV, 178; *þis latyn* V, 40; besides: V, 71; V, 90 etc. The Plural is: *þis*, *þise* or *þes*, *þese*. In the C Text we also meet with *þees*, *þuse*. —

*þis provisoures* II, 170; *al þis fyfty wyntre* III, 39; *þise aren men* III, 80; *þes gomes* II, 73; C — *þuse wordes* I, 198; *thees aren wordes* II, 196.

IV. The A.-S. Pronoun *ylc* appears in connexion with *þis* or *þat* in the meaning of *same*.

*telle me þis ilke* I, 83; *þat ilke while* VI, 164.

V. The A.-S. *þylc* does not occur in our Poem.

VI. From the A.-S. *svilc* we have the form *suche*; C — *such*, *swich* I, 64; *Suche famyn shal aryse* VI, 325; *Suche lawes to loke* VI, 319.

VII. About the A.-S. *silfa*—*self*, comp. Pers. Pronouns.

VIII. The A.-S. *same* is used, preceded by the Definite Article:

*Taverners until hem tolde þe same* pr. 227.

## THE RELATIVE PRONOUNS.

As in Anglo-Saxon, the Demonstrative Pronoun *se*, *seo*, *þæt* is repeated and in the second place used as a Relative, so in like manner in our Poem the Pronoun *þat*, which, however, remains unchangeable in all cases:

*alle þe comune in kare þat coveyten lyve in trewthe* III, 163; *Tho þat entren of o colour* III, 237.

The Relative Pronouns *who*, *what* and *which*, being in their form identical with the Interrogatives, see under those.

## THE INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS.

The A.-S. Interrogative Pronoun *hva* (Masculine and Feminine) appears as:

*who* in the Nominative:

*Lorde, who shal wonye in þi wones* III, 234; *For wite 3e nevere who is worthi ac god wote who hath nede* VII, 78.



The Genitive is *whas* (A.-S. *hwæs*):

*I had wondre what she was and whas wyf she were*  
II, 18; *And god askede of hem whas was þe coygne* C.  
II, 46.

The Dative and Accusative *whom*; *whame* C Text; are formed from the A.-S. Dative *hwam*.

*Telle me to whom, madame, þat tresore appendeth* I, 45.

The C Text gives this passage thus:

*Telle 3e me now to wham þat tresore by-longeþ* II, 43;

The Neuter-Form *what* (A.-S. *hwāt*) remains invariable and is used of persons and things:

*What is þis womman, quod I, so worthily atired?*  
II, 19; *what is þis to mene?* I, 11; *What may it be?* I, 60.

The Instrumental *hwi* furnished the Adverbs *whi* III, 258 and *how*, V, 11; C—*hou* IV, 410.

The A.-S. *hwilc* gave existence to the Interrogative Pronoun *which*, *whiche* V, 297; *whiche maistries* IV, 25.

The A.-S. *hwæder* (which of two) — *whether* does not occur any where as an Interrogative Pronoun.

The above-mentioned Interrogative Pronouns occur frequently in a Relative sense. — Compounds, formed by the Relative *who* and the Adverb *so* in the meaning of *whoever*, *whosoever* are not rare:

*Who-so haveth þe hood, shuld have amendes of þe cloke* V, 332; *For who-so hath more þan I, þat angreth me sore* V, 117; *but ho-so schrape my mawe* V, 124.

## THE INDEFINITE PRONOUNS.

The A.-S. Numeral *an*, *a* appears the same in *Piers the Plowman* and serves as the Indefinite Article. Other forms see under Numerals.

The Negative *nan*, *no* becomes *non*, *no*.

The A.-S. *sum* is *some* or *somme*; both are used indiscriminately; very rarely *summe*.

The A.-S. *ælc* changes into *eche*, which is mostly found; *uche* pr. 207: — compound with *one*: *uchone* I, 17; I, 51. —

The A.-S. *ænig* appears as: *any* II, 193; *ani* II, 76; *eny* II, 203.

From the A.-S. Substantive *viht* (creature, being) we have the compounds *a-viht* and *na-viht* which gave existence to *auzte* V, 489 and *nouzte* V, 479.

For other examples, see under: Adverbs of Negation.

The A.-S. *genoh* used as Adjective and Adverb, gives *ynough* VII, 86,

The A.-S. *ægðer* (unusquisque); *naðer* (neuter) and *oðer* (alius, alter) furnished the Indefinite Pronouns *either*, *eyther* — *neither*, *neyther*, *noyther*, (C—*noþer* II, 155) — *other*:

*And eyther hitte other* V, 164; *þat eyther despiseth other* V, 148.

It is to be observed that *neither* is followed by *ne*. For examples see under: Adverbs of Negation.

The A.-S. *feawe* (from *feá*, paucus) changed into *fewe* and is often preceded by the Indefinite Article:

*A fewe cruddes* and *creem* VI, 284.

*fela*, expressing the contrary of *feawe*, appears as *fele* in: *fele wordis folwing þer-after* III, 338. It has been displaced in Modern-English by *many*.

## NUMERALS.

### I. Cardinal-Numbers:

1. An (A.-S. *an*) coincides in its form with the Indefinite Article; it is *a* before consonants, *an* before vowels; yet this rule has not always been strictly followed; *h* is generally preceded by *an*:

*In habite as an hermite* pr. 3.

Other forms for the first Number are *on*, *o*:

*O god with-oute gynnynye* II, 30; *of o colour an of on wille* III, 237

2 From the A.-S. Feminine *tvā* we have the Numeral *two*:

*Two risen up* V, 333; whilst *tweyne* is formed from the Masculine *twegen*: *A bow other tweyne* V, 32. — Both however are used indiscriminately. —

Besides, we have *bothe* (A.-S. *bā*) and *beire* (corrupted from the Genitive *begra*) — *hym and his bestes bothe* III, 272; *bothe lyf and lyme* V, 99; *Whan Symonye and cyvile sei3 here beire wille* II, 66.

In Text C we find besides *boþe* also *buth* I, 216. —

To lay an emphasis on *both* it is accompanied by *two*: *on bothe two sydes* II, 54 — analogous to the A.-S. *batva*.

- 3 The A.-S. *þreo* becomes *þre*, *þree*:  
*bitwixen hem þre* V, 338; *þree þinges* I, 20.
- 4 The A.-S. *feóver* is equal to *four*:  
*þise four þe fader of hevene made* VII, 53.
- 5 The A.-S. *fiþ* appears as *fyve*:  
*and gaf 3ow fyve wittes* I, 15.
- 6 The A.-S. *six* remained *syx*:  
*syx score dayes* III, 145.
- 7 The A.-S. *seofon* softened to *sevene*:  
*þere aren sevene sustren* V, 127.
- 8 *eahta* is shortened to *eight* VI, 329.
- 9 *nigon* becomes *nyne*:  
*nyne dayes* I, 119.
- 10 *tyn* — *ten* VI, 244.
- 11 *endlufon* changes into *ellevene*:  
*ellevene tymes* III, 180.
- 12 *toelf* — *twelve* V, 214.
- 13 *þrettyne* — *threttene* V, 214.

In the Tens, the Anglo-Saxon termination *tig* changes into *ti* (*ty*): —

- 30 *þryttig* — *þretti* V, 422; the C Text shows Metathesis in: *þertty* VIII, 30.

- 40 *feover-tig* — *fourty* C IV, 41  
 50 *fiftig* — *fyfty* III, 89.  
 60 *sixtig* — *sixty* V, 441.  
 100 *hund*, *hundred* and:  
 1000 *þúsend*; both neuter Substantives appear with a final *s* in the Plural:  
*an hondreth* pr. 210; *a thousand of men* V, 517;  
*þousandes* I, 115.
- II. *Ordinal Numbers*:
1. *þe firste* V, 168; *þis furst* III, 243. The C-Text shows besides *furst* II, 60: *ferste* II, 23. (In A.-S. we have *þāt forme*).
  2. *þe other* (A.-S. *oðer*) comp. Indef. Pron. — In the C Text we meet already with *þe secounde* (derived from the French *second*) II, 23.
  3. *þe thrydde* V, 504 (A.-S. *þrydde*).
  4. *þe fierthe* VII, 52 (A.-S. *feorþe*).

## ADVERBS.

We have to distinguish Stems or Simple Adverbs from Derivative Adverbs. The former being merely adopted from the A.-S., we will proceed to treat at once of the various manners, by which the Derivation takes place.

### I. *Adverbs, derived from Substantives*:

*parcel-mele* (by parcels at a time) III, 81; (*mele* formed from the A.-S. Dative Plural *mælum*).

*pound-mel* (by pounds at a time) II, 222. From the Accusative are formed:

*I was sum-tyme a frere* V, 136; *yspilte many a tyme* V, 442; *and some tyme at nones* V, 378; *3if I regne any-while* IV, 177; *And other-while þei aren elles-where* pr. 164; *And other-whiles more* V, 557.

## II. *Adverbs, derived from Adjectives:*

1. Derivatives are formed from Adjectives by adding *e*:

*Went wyde in þis world* pr. 4; *swonken ful harde* pr. 21; *And þanne resoun rode faste* IV, 42; *To be wedded at þi wille and where þe leve liketh* III, 18.

The Adjectives, ending in A.-S. in *lic* have their Adverb in *lice*; in *Piers the Plowman* this form has been corrupted to *liche*, *li* or *ly*. Though the Adjective and the Adverb sometimes happen to be the same in form, one began already more and more to consider *li* (*ly*) as the exclusive termination of the latter:

*trielich ymaked* pr. 14; *And now dowel at þe day of dome is dignelich underfongen* VII, 171; *And go hunte hardiliche* VI, 30; *And nevere happiliche eftre entre* V, 626; *And also kenne me kyndeli* I, 81; *Ac redili, resoun, þow shalt nouzte ride fro me* IV, 190; *And preyed hir pitously* I, 80.

2. Adverbs, derived from certain Cases of the Adjectives (comp. Koch, hist. Gr.)

a) from the Genitive:

*elles* pr. 91; *ellis* VI, 233 (A.-S. *elles*); *eftsones* V, 481 (A.-S. *sones*); *uneth to loke* IV, 60 (A.-S. *uneaðe*). — Further belong to this class the Adverbs in *wards* (A.-S. *veardes*), which, however lose the *s* sometimes:

*The kynge called conscience and afterwarðes resoun* IV, 171; *For hunger hiderward hasteth* VI, 323; *whiderward he wolde* V, 307; *And kaires hym to-kirke-warde* V, 305.

b) from the Accusative:

*selde* pr. 20; *C seylde* I, 22 (A.-S. *seldan*). *ful* pr. 20 (A.-S. *full*).

The Comparison of those Adverbs takes place according to the rules, given under "Comparison", where the Adverbs of irregular Comparison are also to be found.

## III. *Numeral-Adverbs:*

*ones* II, 227; *onis* pr. 213 (derived from the A.-S. *Ge-*

nitive *anes* (from *an*); *twyes* C VIII, 29; *tweye* B IV, 22 (A.-S. *twigges*).

The other Multipliers are still formed with the aid of the A.-S. *sið* (gressus) — *sithe*; pl. *sithes* (times):

*Sixe sithes or sevene* V, 431; *sevene sithes* VII, 178; *sixty sithes*, I, *sleuthe*, have for3ete it *sith* V, 441; — however, we find already the modern manner of expressing multiplication in: *ellevene tymes* III, 180; *ten hundreth tymes* V, 432; *nyne hundreth tymes* V, 377.

This is a very expressive sign of the state of transition, even of confusion, through which the English Language passed in Langland's time. The old forms, still in memory, strove to preserve their old position; but were unable to oppose any effective resistance to the innovations, which, once introduced, spread with overwhelming rapidity.

#### IV. *Adverbs, derived from Prepositions:*

Prepositions, connected with Substantives, Adjectives or Adverbs, appear very often as compound Adverbs.

*a-wei* pr. 166; *þer-while* pr. 173; *un-while* V, 345; *bytime* V, 647; *bizunde* III, 109; *þere-in* I, 61; *þere-myde* VII, 26; *þerfore* IV. 54; *an-hiegh* pr. 13.

#### V. *Adverbs, derived from Pronouns:*

*þider* II, 161 (A.-S. *þider*); *þennes* I, 73 (A.-S. *þanan* Germ. von dannen); *hennes* III, 108 (A.-S. *hinan* Germ. von hinnen) — both are remarkable on account of their Genitival signs —; *þer* I, 131; *þere* III, 14 (A.-S. *þær*) mostly occurs in the signification of *where* in *Piers the Plowman*. — *whan* pr. 1 (A.-S. *hvanne*) — *þanne* pr. 123 (A.-S. *þonne*).

#### VI. *Adverbs affirmation and Negation:*

From the A.-S. Particle (*gea*) we have the form: *3e* which answers to the Modern-English (*yea*), expressing that the speaker gives his assent:

'*3e lorde*', quod *þat lady* 'lorde forbede elles!' III, 111; '*3e*, and *3it a poynt*' quod *Pieres* 'I preyre *3ow of more*' VI

38; '3e, leve Pieres', *quod þis pilgrymes and profered hym huiŕe* V, 563.

From *gese*, *gise* remains *3us*, used to strengthen the affirmation (*3us* is the modern *yes*).

'*3us, redili*' *quod repentaunce and radde hym to þe beste* V, 125. — '*3us*', *quod Pieres þe plowman and pukked* (pushed) *hem alle to gode* V, 643.

The enforcing of the Negative by Repetition constantly occurs throughout the whole of *Piers the Plowman*.

The common Particles of Negation are:

*nau3t*, *uou3te*, in Text C we have *no3t*, *nat* (A.-S. *na-viht*, *naht*) equal to the modern *not*; besides *non*, *no*, *na* — our *no*.

The absolute Negative is expressed in our Poem by *nay* (A.-S. *neā*):

'*Nay*', *sothly 'he seyde' save in my 3outhē* V, 241.

The following passage from Text C, IV, 182:

*Hue may "ney as" moche do as* — answers to our: *She may "not so" much do as* —.

To deny the relation between the Subject and the Predicate, Langland uses the form *ne*. This *ne* precedes the verb to which it belongs and is very often prefixed to it; verbs of this kind are especially the A.-S. *nesan* and *nillan*.

For examples see under Inflection, Anomalous Verbs I. and III.

*ne* precedes in:

*þat I ne moste folwe* V, 151; *There ne was ratoun in alle þe route* pr. 177; *ne have a peny to mi pitaunce* V, 268.

Equivalent to the Modern-English *nor*, Langland employs *ne* (A.-S. *nē*) as the second part of a compound Negative. Thus:

*It is nau3t al gode to þe goste þat þe gutte azeþ* — *Ne lifode to þe likam* I, 36; *I dar nou3te for fere of hym fy3te ne chyde* IV, 52; *May no sugre ne swete þynge ass-*

*wage mi swellynge* V, 122; *And nevere wikkedliche weye ne wikke chaffare use* V, 229; *Ac neither of oure lordes ne of oure lady* V, 403; *3ete can I neither solfe ne synge ne seyntes lyves rede* V, 423; *Ne gete my grace for giftes so me god save — Ne for no Mede have mercy* IV, 141.

## PREPOSITIONS.

We divide the Prepositions into Real and Derived (comp. Mätzner, engl. Gramm.).

To the 1. Class belong:

*in* (A.-S. *in*) — *I shope me in shroudes* pr. 2 (in the meaning of our *with*) C has here *into* I, 2.

*at* (A.-S. *æt*) contracted with the Definite Article to *atte*. For examples see under: Consonants (*t*) and Demonstrative Pronouns (I).

*on* (A.-S. *on, ô, â*) — *on a May mornynge on Malverne hulles* pr. 5. — The form *a* occurs in: *a lengthe and a brede* III, 202.

In the expression: *and kenne it þe on engliche* VII, 107; *on* is used in the meaning of the Modern-English *in*.

*of* (A.-S. *of, af*) with the Passive-Voice, answering to the Modern-English *by*, — *warned of þe prophete* III, 273 — is still in use at Langland's time; *of* answers our *for* in: *Yet I courbed on my knees and cryed hir of grace* II, 1.

*up* (A.-S. *up, upp*) is found very often instead of our *upon*: *þe toure up þe toft* I, 12.

*bi* or *be* (A.-S. *bi, be*) — *bi a bornes side* pr. 8; *bi þe Rode* IV, 134; *And gert bakbitinge be a brocoure* V, 130.

*for* (A.-S. *for*) — *for colde of my nailles* VI, 62; *þei chiveled for elde* V, 193; *And preye for þe pople* V, 105.

*fram, fro* (A.-S. *fram, fra*) — *To kepe hym, as covenante was fram cursed shrewes* VI, 162. — *And fro þe fende it defende* VI, 90.



*with*, *wiþ* (A.-S. *wið*) — *with bedellus and wiþ bayl-lyves* III, 2.

*til* (A.-S. *tīl*) used in the sense of *to*. — *Biddeth amende-3ow meke him til his maistre ones* V, 610; — *until* has the same signification: *Taverners until hem tolde þe same* pr. 227.

*to* (A.-S. *tō*) — *þat he borne was to body or to soule* I, 62; *And whan I come to þe kirke* V, 104; *And I commaunde þe, quod þe Kyng to conscience þanne* IV, 6.

*after* (A.-S. *āfter*) V, 314.

*over* (A.-S. *ofer*).

*under* (A.-S. *under*) — *under a brode banke* pr. 3.

*þorw*, *þourgh*, *thorwgh* (A.-S. *þurh*):

*Favel þorw his faire speche* II, 41; *Thorwgh flodes and þourgh foule wederes* VI, 326.

*into* (A.-S. *in-to*) — *I bihelde in-to þe est* pr. 13.

*uppon* (A.-S. *uppan*, *uppon*) — *has in Piers the Plowman the meaning of on*:

*Thanne conscience uppon his caple (horse) kaireth forth faste* IV, 23.

*binethe* (A.-S. *beneoðan*) pr. 15.

*bifor*, *biforn* (A.-S. *beforan*):

*And comen alle bifor cryst* VII, 188;

*And stode biforn hem alle* pr. 183.

Form the A.-S. *tōforan* or *tōfor*, we have the Preposition *tofore*, meaning *before*:

*And made a vowe tofore god* V, 457;

*with-oute gynnyng* II, 30 (A.-S. *wiðutan*).

*aboute* (A.-S. *ā-būtan*, arisen from *ā* Prep. and *būtan*) — *aboute þe cattis nekke* pr. 178; *aboute þe cattes hals* pr. 179.

*above* (A.-S. *ā-būfan*) V, 195.

To the 2. Class belong:

*amonge* or *amonges* (A.-S. *ā(ge) mang*): *amonge þe riche rayes I rendred a lessoun* V, 211.

*Thanne drowe I me amonges draperes* V, 209.

*a3eins, a3ein* (A.-S. *âgên*):

*And soffre hem to selle somdele a3eins resoun* III, 92;

*And lith a3ein þe lawe* III, 145.

*bitwixen* (A.-S. *betwihs*):

*For to trye þis chaffare bitwixen hem þre* V, 338.

In these three compound Prepositions an inorganic *t* has been added in later times; they are now: *amongst*, *against*, *betwixt*.

## CONJUNCTIONS.

According to their Derivation, most of the Conjunctions arose from Pronouns, Adverbs or Nouns; the Number of *Real* Conjunctions is but limited.

We divide them into *Simple*, *Compound* and *Contracted* Conjunctions.

### I. *Simple Conjunctions*:

*and* (A.-S. *and*) *an* (A.-S. *ono*); according to Koch (hist. Gramm. VIII. Buch II. Bd. p. 410) *an* no corruption of *and*. Both Conjunctions are used indiscriminately in the meaning of the Modern-English *and*; though *an* does not occur so frequently and admits besides of the signification *if*. —

*Ac many a justice an juroure* VII, 44; *Barones an burgeis and bonde-men* pr. 216; *And mizte kisse þe kyng for cosyn, an (if) she wolde* II, 132.

*ek, eke* (A.-S. *êc*) also. — *And ek wept and wronge whan she was attached* II, 236; *Glottonye he gaf hem eke and grete othes togydere* II, 92.

*ac* (A.-S. *ac*) but occurs still very often. — *Ac on a May mornynge* pr. 5; *Ac it is nauzt by þe bischop* pr. 80.

*3 if* (A.-S. *gif*) *if*. — *to worche, 3if þei sholde* pr. 37; in lapse of time the 3, which was already softened from the A.-S. *g*, disappeared entirely; comp. Consonants: *g*.

*þan* (A.-S. *þonne*) is constantly used after a Comparative like our *than*; only once we find the corrupted form *þen*; viz. *And smale mys myd hem mo þen a þousande* pr. 147.

*þowgh*, *þow*<sub>3</sub>; C — *þauh* (A.-S. *þeah*) *though*. — *þow*<sub>3</sub> *I fizte sholde* VI, 36; *And þowgh pore men* VI, 42.

*þat* (A.-S. *þät*) is the same as our *that*.

*sith*, *sitthe* (A.-S. *sith*) is our *since*. — *sith charite haþ þe chapman* pr. 64.

*til*, *tyl* (A.-S. *till*) is used very often to connect sentences and expresses consequence; in which case it answers to the Modern-English *until*. —

*Of wykked wordes I, wrath, here wortes I-made — Tyl 'þow lixe' and 'þow liyte' lopen oute at ones* V, 163; *Tyl þei bere leues of low speche* V, 139.

In the meaning of our *that* it stands in:

*butter, melke and chese forsleuthed in my servyse til (that) it myzte serve no man* V, 445.

*3et* (A.-S. *gīt, gēt*) C — *3ut* is to be found several times in the sense in which we now use it; occasionally it appears in the meaning of *although, even if*. — *3et have I no kynde knowing, quod I, 3et mote 3e kenne me better* I, 136.

## II. Compound Conjunctions:

*for-þi* (A.-S. *forþy*) has a relative signification. It is antiquated now and displaced by *therefore* which in *Piers the Plowman* is only used adverbially (comp. Adverbs IV). *For-þi I can and can nouzte of courte speke more* pr. 111.

## III. Contracted Conjunctions:

*but*, C — *bote*, (A.-S. *b-utan*) *but*. —

*But rizte as þe lawe wil loke* II, 197; it is sometimes followed by *if* and signifies then *unless*. — *But if I reule þus 3oure reume rende out my ribbes* IV, 186. — *And bete betoun þer-with but if she wolde worche* V, 83.

*other* (A.-S. *ā-hwæðer*) signifying *or* occurs very often

together with this, or after *either* (of the same origin). In Modern English we use the simple *or* instead. — *A leef other tweyne* V, 20<sup>3</sup>. —

*Alle þat bereth baslarde, brode swerde or launce — Axe other hachet or eny wepne ellis* III, 303 and 304.

*neither, neyther, noyther* forms the Negative of *either*; it is our *neither*. Further information as well as examples are given under: Adverbs of Negation.

*als, as* (A.-S. *eal-svā*) is the Modern English *as* and is used comparatively. —

*Barones an burgeis and bonde-men als I seiȝ in þis assemble* pr. 216; *I myȝte nouȝte eet many ȝeres as a man ouȝte* V, 120.

*als* means *also* in:

*ȝoure hevene als* III, 72.

*whether* (contracted into: *where*) (A.-S. *hwæðer*) is only used as a Conjunction. —

*Whether þei shulde þer-with worschip þe kyng Sesar* I, 48.

*Where he ritt or rest or renneth to playe* pr. 171.

## CONJUGATION.

As in Anglo-Saxon the Verbs fall into two divisions. To the first belong the Verbs which form their Past Tense by changing the Vowel, *Strong Verbs*; to the second those which add a termination, *Weak Verbs*.

## INFINITIVE MOOD.

Following the tendency of the transitory Period of the English Language in which our Poem is written, to lose the Anglo-Saxon Inflections more and more, or at

least to attenuate full-sounding terminations, the Infinitive ends in *en* (*n*) or *e* (A.-S. *a n*).

As regards the Uniting-Vowel (Germ. Bindevocal) in terminations of the Infinitive, comp.: Weak Conjugation.

Verbs of French origin, having also got rid of their inflectional forms, undergo the same changes. About the original French *Inchoative-Verbs*, see under: French Consonants, *r*.

We must remark a great uncertainty in the manner in which Langland employs either of the terminations *en* and *e*; a few examples will suffice to show this:

*meten* pr. 11; *soupen* II, 96; *waxen* III, 300; *sleen* III, 285; *plese* pr. 30; *spede* V, 601; *make* pr. 33; *wende* VI, 67; *wenden* II, 160; *lete* pr. 187; *leten* V, 465; *wisse* V, 562; *wissen* V, 540; *do* III, 62; *done* IV, 27.

An anomalous form of an Infinitive is found in the C Text: *ywite*. *Let nat þi left half ywite etc.* IV, 75. The Prefix *y* (A.-S. *ge*) is every where else used exclusively with the Past Participle.

## PRESENT-TENSE.

The regular terminations of the Present-Tense, Indicative Mood, are: — *e*, — *est* (— *st*), — *eþ* (— *þ*) — *eth* (— *th*) in the Singular, and — *eþ* or — *en* in the Plural.

For the Uniting-Vowel, Present-Tense, see: Weak Conjugation.

1. *sg. trowe* IV, 41; *leve* III, 333; *wepe* V, 113.
2. *sg. dryest* I, 25; *slepest* I, 5; *sest* I, 5.

In the contraction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Singular with the Personal Pronoun *þow* (in the form of *tow*; comp. Consonants: *þ*), the inflectional *t* falls out.

*lokestow* VII, 136 (contracted from *lokest-tow*); *slep-*

*estow* I, 5; *sestow* I, 5; *hastow* III, 105; *knowestow* V, 539; *coudestow* V, 540.

We observe this as a peculiarity of the B Text; in the C Text we generally meet with the full forms.

3. *s.g. makeþ* IV, 25; *liggeþ* III, 175; *angreþ* V, 117; *goþ* V, 314; *liþ* I, 124. The termination in the C Text is mostly *ith* (*yþ*) for this Person: *shewith* I, 182; *tellith* II, 126; *romyþ* I, 186.

A syncope of the inflectional *e* usually takes place after a final vowel in the second and third Persons of the Present Indicative. Further contractions are found in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person, when the Stem ends in *t* (or *d*, which under this influence becomes *t*): besides the syncope of the inflectional *e*, the final *þ* changes into *t* and is thus added to the Stem; a few examples occur, where even this *t* is omitted and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person shows nothing but the Stem of the Verb:

*ritt* (for *rideþ*) IV, 13; *rest* (for *resteþ*) pr. 171; *bet* (for *beteþ*) IV, 59; *fynt* (for *findeþ*) IV, 131.

C — *rit* (for *rideþ*) I, 186; *rat* (for *redeþ*) IV, 409.

The termination of the Plural, which in Anglo-Saxon was *aþ*, has first been changed into *eþ*, and at a time of still greater confusion in the Language, when one no longer knew, how to discern the different terminations, taken over from the Anglo-Saxon, has been replaced by the original Inflection of the Subjunctive Mood — *on*, softened to — *en*.

Both endings occur indiscriminately in our Poem. — There are already a few instances which show a total disappearance of the old Inflection.

This again proves the transitory state, in which the Language was. —

*we mowen* pr. 172; *we mowe* V, 509; *Ac we preye for 3ow pieres* VI, 127; *Many of 3ow ne wedde nouzt þe women þat 3e with delen* VII, 90; *3e wasten þat men wynnē*

VI, 135; *And 3e þat seke seynte James V, 57; If þat be soth, quod pieres, 'pat 3e seyne, I shal it sone asspye' VI, 131; as lettred men us techeth VII, 175; Prestis þat precheth þe poeple to gode, asken mede III, 222.*

The Subjunctive Mood, having dispensed with the Old Inflection, terminates in *e*:

*3if þat I lye VI, 60; Til þow make restitucioun and rekne with hem alle V, 277; uche a wise wizte, wite wel his owne pr. 207; þow<sub>3</sub> we mysse a schrewe pr. 196; þough 3e deye VI, 122; And þowgh pore men profre 3ow presentis VI, 42.*

### IMPERATIVE MOOD.

The Imperative still shows a difference between the Singular and Plural: viz., it preserves in the Plural the termination *ep* — (*eth*), whilst the Singular ends only in *e*. In the C Text we sometimes find forms without any Inflection: *crist kep þe! I, 148.* —

*Love hem and lene hem, so lawe of god techeth! VI, 224; helpe hem with þi godis VI 226; Wyves and wydwes wolle and flex spynneth, Maketh cloth, I conseilte 3ow and kenneth so 3owre douztres! etc. VI, 13, 14.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> Person Plural however, is replaced by the Subjunctive-Mood (in this case the Personal Pronoun follows the Verb.):

*be we never so bolde! pr. 188; go we dyne, gowe! pr. 226.*

### PARTICIPLES.

I. *The Present Participle*, usually terminating in *yng* or *ing* seems to have arisen from the Gerundival form in Anglo-Saxon, which, though mostly used substan-

tively sometimes appears adjectivally. The confusion of this with the real Present Participle is seen already in Semi-Saxon (comp. Maetzner, engl. Grammat. I. p. 327). In *Piers the Plowman* we find still signs of the original Gerundival form to support our theory; viz.

*I slombred in a slepyng* pr. 10.

*Present Participles* are:

*Worchyng and wandring* pr. 19; *In setting and sowing* pr. 21; *And resoun with him ritte rownyng togideres* IV, 23; *And nyvelyng with þe nose and his nekke hangyng* V, 135.

Forms in *ynd* as:

*That cardinales ben callid and closynde* 3ates CI, 132.

-- are of rare occurrence.

II. *The Past Participle* appears mostly with the Prefix *y* (A.-S. *gē*), though its use is quite unsettled and we often find Participles of the same Verb with and without the Prefix.

*yblamed* III, 281; *yclothed* II, 8; *yfolwed* III, 39; *eten* V, 381; *yeten* I, 252; *drunken* V, 381; *ydronke* VI, 181; *sowen* VI, 5; *ysowen* V, 550.

## STRONG CONJUGATION.

The modification of the vowel (Germ. Brechung) which took place in Anglo-Saxon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Pers. Sing. Pres. Indic. has not left any traces behind; we always find the vowel of the Infinitive remaining all through the Present:

*And he þat spekeþ* (A.-S. *specan* — *spicō*) for *þe pore* VII, 46; Further: *lo where he standeth* (A.-S. *standan*) II, 5; *sestow þis poeple* IV, 86; *She gyveth þe gailers golde* III, 137.

The Preterite, formed by change of vowel (Germ. Ablaut), analogous to the systematic Inflection of the Anglo-Saxon Conjugation, ought to terminate in a consonant in



the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Pers. Sing. where we frequently meet with an *e* at the end. This final *e*, which was certainly not pronounced, was a mere orthographic sign of the length of the radical vowel preceding. — If Langland expresses the length of a vowel orthographically (which he does not always do), he uses two different ways: he either doubles it, or adds a final *e*. Examples for this will be seen throughout the Poem. — With respect to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Persons Singular of the Preterite of the Strong Conjugation, he also follows this mode of lengthening:

*I roos when þei were arest* V, 234; C: *Ich a-ros* VII, 236; *Thanne gan I to meten* pr. 11; *She spak to spyn-neres* V, 216; *That bar þat blisful barne* II, 3; *Cesse þe souteresse sat on þe benche* V, 315; *I fonde þere Freris* pr. 58; *He bare a burdaun* V, 524; *I shope me in shroudes* pr. 2; *And stode biforn hem alle* pr. 183.

The C Text seldom expresses a long vowel by the addition of a final *e*. We read there: *shop* I, 2; *strok* I, 197; *stod* I, 107. —

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Pers. Sing. mostly occurs with the old inflectional *e* at the end:

*þow crope in-to a kaban* III, 190; *pore men þow robbedest and bere here bras at þi bakke* III, 395; C: *þow shope* VII, 424; without Inflection: *þow wan* VII, 255.

The usual termination of the Plural is still (—*en*) (A.-S. — *un*, — *on*); in a few cases, however, the Inflection has disappeared. The difference from the Singular, formed by means of Vowel-Change, has not been strictly observed:

*Swonken ful harde and wonnen that wastours with glotonye destruyeth* pr. 21, 22.

further:

*stonden* II, 71; *riden* IV, 29; *flowen* II, 233; *swore* II, 168; *come* IV, 43; *They gaf pardoun for pens* II, 222; *Spiceres spoke with hym* II, 225.

The Past Participle terminates in — *en* or — *e*.

## REDUPLICATION.

The Reduplication, which took place in Gothic to form the Past Tense of Strong Verbs, e. g. *slēp*, *saislēp*; *hait*, *haihait*, is the real origin of the Vowel-Change, which those Verbs undergo in Anglo-Saxon. The vowel of the Root seems to have been first weakened, and in time entirely omitted, whilst the vowel of the Reduplication remained as the characteristic sign of the Past. In this case the Gothic *ai* became *éo* (*ê*). So we have *slæpe*, *slēp*; *vepe*, *veóp*; *hate*, *hêt*; *flove*, *fleóv*; (comp. Koch, hist. Gr. I, p. 240).

This A.-S. *éo*, *ê* appears in the corresponding Verbs of our Poem as: *e* or *o*.

The Past Participle generally shows the vowel of the Present<sup>1)</sup>.

*holde* VII, 5 (A.-S. *heáldan* — *to hold*); *holde* V, 419 (*I hold*); *holde* I, 9 (*they hold*); *bihelde* pr. 13 (A.-S. *be-heöld* — *I beheld*); *holden* IV, 118 (*they held*); *yholden* I, 84 (A.-S. *heálden* — *held*).

*falleth* I, 164 (A.-S. *feállan* — *he falls*); *fel* I, 113, *felle* VII, 157, C—*ful* I, 113, II, 120 (A.-S. *feóll* — *I fell*); *fellen* I, 119, C—*fullen* II, 126 (*they fell*); *fallen* pr. 65 (A.-S. *feallen* — *fallen*).

*knowe* pr. 122, C—*knaue* II, 72 (A.-S. *cnávan* — *to know*); *knewe* II, 226 (A.-S. *cneóv* — *he knew*); *knownen* pr. 56 (A.-S. *cnáven* — *known*).

*overlepe* pr. 199, C—*to lepen* III, 241 (A.-S. *hleápan* — *to leap*); *overlepe* pr. 150; C—*lep* III, 225, *leep* III, 69; further: B: *lope* IV, 153; *loupe* Subj. Sg. IV, 106 (A.-S. *hleóp* → *leapt*).

1) All changes of vowels which are not explained here, will be found in the Chapter: Vowels.

*hat* V, 582 (A.-S. *hâtan* — *I order*); *hight* — as *ouwe lorde hight* pr. 102 (A.-S. *hêt, heht* — *he ordered, commanded*); C—*het* II, 17; *•ykote* I, 63; *hoten* II, 21 (A.-S. *hâten* — *commanded*).

*sowen* VI, 67 (A.-S. *sâvan* — *to sow*); C—*sew* VII, 271 (A.-S. *seóv* — *I sowed*).

*leten* pr. 181 (A.-S. *lêtan* — *to let*); *lete* I, 165 (A.-S. *leót, lét* — *I let*); *leten* II, 158 (*they let*).

Some of these verbs adopted the weak Inflection; such as:

*hangen* pr. 170; C—*honge* IV, 149; *hongy* III, 207 (A.-S. *hangen* — *to hang*); *honged* I, 68; but the C Text has: *heng* II, 64 (A.-S. *hêng* — *hung, hanged*); *hanged* pr. 176 (A.-S. *hangen* — *hung, hanged*).

*wepe* V, 62, *wepen* VII, 120 (A.-S. *vêpan* — *to weep*); *wept* II, 236; but strong: *wepe* V, 540 (A.-S. *veóp*).

*houped* VI, 174 (A.-S. *hveóp* from *hwôpan* — *to whoop*).

*slepe* VII, 120 (A.-S. *slêpan* — *to sleep*); *sleped* V, 4 (A.-S. *slêpen* — *slept*).

The verb *gange* II, 167 (A.-S. *gangan*) admits of great irregularity. From the contracted form *gân*, we have the Infinitive *gon* II, 154; *go* II, 201. — The Present is regular; exceptionally we read in Text C: *goop* X, 170 for the usual *goep*. The Preterite *geóng* was already in Anglo-Saxon replaced by the weak form *eóde* (from the Gothic root *i* — (*ire*) comp. Koch, hist. Gr. I. p. 243).

This A.-S. *eóde* changed into:

*3ede* 1. Sg. Pret. VII, 142; *3edest* 2. Sg. Pret. V, 504; *3ede* 3. Pl. Pret. pr. 40, C has: *3oden* I, 41. —

Besides this, the Preterite *went* Sg. pr. 4; *wenten* Pl. pr. 54, formed from the weak Verb: *wenden* (*to turn* — Germ. *wenden*), was used in the same sense as *eóde* and has in time quite displaced this. The Past Participle appears as *ygo* (A.-S. *gangen*) V, 207.

## CHANGE OF VOWEL.

The Change of the Vowel in the Root (Germ. Ablaut.), which is employed in Strong Verbs to form their Preterite and Past Participle, seems to have arisen from an original Reduplication, though those Verbs must have thrown off the reduplicate syllable at a very early date, (the consequence of which was the softening of the vowel in the stem). In Gothic as well as in Anglo-Saxon we find the Past Tenses formed merely by a Modification of the Radical-Vowel.

Observation: The Language tends greatly in the period of transition to use the same vowel in the Preterite, both for the Singular and Plural. This statement will serve as an explanation of the frequent examples in conformation of it, which are found amongst the following Verbs.

As in Gothic (comp. Ulphilas, ed Heyne pag. 395), we divide these Verbs into 5 classes.

I. Verbs, which have in Gothic the Modification: *i* Pres.; *a* Pret. Sg.; *u* Pret. Pl.; *u* Past Part.; undergo the same Inflection in Anglo-Saxon, except before the Labials *l* and *r*, in which case they have *eo*, *ē* in the Present and *ēa* in the Preterite Singular. In the Past Participle *u* is often replaced by *o*. In our Poem the same rule holds with most Verbs: *i* in the Present is written *y*; for the original *u* in the Pret. Pl. and Past Part. we find *o*, more seldom *u*:

1) *to wynne* pr. 179; *I wan* V, 464; *þei wonnen* pr. 22; *wonne* Past Part. V, 267.

2) *to drynke* II, 93; *I drynke* V, 177; *drunken* Past Part. V, 381; *ydronke* VI, 281.

3) *synge* Inf. V, 423; *he syngeth* III, 251; *þei songen* V, 345, V, 516.

4) *to swynke* VI, 26; *some swonken* pr. 21.

5) *it bigynneth* I, 163, V, 304; *it bigan* V, 295.

Verbs, the stems of which end in *nd* strengthen the *u* of the Past Participle into *ou*:

1) *to bynde and to unbynde* pr. 101; *bounde* III, 349; *ybounden* Past Part. pr. 178.

2) *fynde* Inf. pr, 117; *I fonde* pr. 17; *founden* Past Part. III, 338.

3) *þei wonden* II, 220; *ywounden* Past Part. V, 525.

Before *l* and *r* the A-S *ëo*, *ë* appears as *ē* in the Present, and the A-S. *ēa* of the Preterite Singular, as *a*:

1) *to helpe* V, 281; *and alle þat helpeth* III, 241; *þei hulpen* VI, 118; *and alle þat halpe* VII, 6; *holpe* Past Part. IV, 169; *hulpe* V, 633, VII, 72.

2) *delven* Inf. VI, 143; *dolven* Past Part. VI, 182.

3) *Eche worde þat he warpe* V, 87; *þe fyrste worde þat he warpe* V, 369.

II. Verbs, which have in Gothic the Modification: *i* Pres.; *a* Pret. Sg.; *ē* Pret. Pl.; *i*, *u* Past Part.; admitted already of an alteration in Anglo-Saxon. The *i* of the Present became hardened into *ē*; the Preterite Singular had *ā*, besides *a*; the *ē* in the Plural was replaced by *æ*, the *i* of the Past Part. by *e* and the *u* by *o*. In *Piers the Plowman* the Pres. shows *e* besides *i*; the Pret. Sing. *a* (occasionally *o*) or *ei*, *ai*, *ee*; the Plural *a* (*o*) or *e* and the Past Part. *e* (*y*) or *o*. The last sometimes shows forms, in which the vowel of the root apparently arose from a confusion owing to its derivation from *i* or *u*.

1) *to gyf* II, 119; *to gyve* II, 144; *god gyf þe sorwe* II, 120; *3e geve* IV, 170; *þei geven* pr. 76; *he 3af 3ow fyve wittes* I, 15; *and gaf hem* III, 21.

An anomalous form appears in:

*And (þei) gaf pardoun for pens* II, 222;

where the Vowel of the Singular is retained in the Plural (see Observation supr.) and the Inflection has disappeared also.

*gyve* II, 148; *gyven* II, 120; *3ove* II, 31 Past Part. C has: *ygeve* III, 126.

2) *to speke* pr. 129; *pei speken* V, 148; *She spak* V, 216; *spek ydelnesee* C III, 101; *pei spoke* II, 225.

3) *eet* Inf. V, 120; *ete* V, 177; *al hunger eet* (Pret.) in *hast* VI, 298; *eten* Past Part. V, 381; *yeten* I, 153.

4) *to see* I, 170; *se* II, 70; *seen* IV, 86; *I se* pr. 201; C: *syt* *how?* II, 5; *we seth* III, 216; *we sen* I, 51; *I seigh* pr. 14; *I sei3* pr. 217; *I say* V, 10; *I saw* II, 17. The C Text has: *he seih* IV, 328; *pei sei3* II, 66; C: *we seo* X, 244; *sauh* I, 109; *sene* Past Part. I, 147; *ysein* pr. 160; *over-seye* V, 378.

5) *to gete* V, 293; *geten* Past Part. V, 295.

6) *to sytten* pr. 96; *sitten* II, 96; *I sat* V, 7; *pei seten* V, 345.

7) *pei liggen* pr. 91; *pei ligge* II, 135; *liggyng* II, 51; *I lay* pr. 9; *The best ale lay in my boure* V, 221; *yleye* V, 82; Past Part.

8) *bidde* Inf. V, 231; *I bidde* V, 407; *he bad* I, 110; An anomalous weak form is: *badde* IV, 14; *pei beden* III, 27; *boden* II, 54 Past Part.

9) *to wreke* V, 85; *wroke* II, 194 Past Part.

10) *to bere* II, 80; *pe Sauter bereth witnesse* II, 38; *beryng* V, 89; *he bare a burdoun* V, 524; *pei baren hym home* V, 365; *yboore* II, 130 Past Part.

11) *to breke* II, 82; *breketh* IV, 57; *he brak* I, 114; *broke* V, 108; *ybroken* pr. 31 Past Part.

12) *to come* IV, 35 (the *o* in the Infinitive arose from a Vocalisation of the A.-S. *v* in *cviman*) *who-so cometh* I, 61; *it cam* pr. 114; *she come* Pret. II, 198; *pei comen* Pl. Pret. pr. 24.

13) *he binam hym his Mnam* (talent) VI, 243 (from *binimen*, to deprive); *bynome* III, 312 Past Part.

III. Verbs, which have the Gothic Modification: *a* Pres.; *ó* Pret. Sg.; *ó* Pret. Pl.; *a* Past Part. preserve it also in Anglo-Saxon. The same regular formation has been adopted in the following examples:

1) *shape* Inf. III, 17; *I shope* pr. 2; C — *shop* I, 2; *þei shopen hem heremites* pr. 57.

2) *to take* V, 28; *þei taketh* II, 36; *he toke his leve* Pret. IV, 14; *he tok* I, 117; *she took* IV, 47; in Text C *þei toke* IV, 84; *taken* I, 153 Past Part.; *ytake* C IV, 139.

3) *fare* Inf. VII, 89; *þei fareth* II, 183; *faren* V, 5 Past Part.

#### *Anomalous Formations.*

Through the influence of the terminating consonants, we have a weakening of the Radical-Vowel *a* into *o* in:

1) *stonde* V, 352; *withstonde* pr. 156; *stondeþ* I, 50; *þei stonden* II, 71.

The elision of *n*, makes *o* long in:

*A mous . . stode biforn hem alle* pr. 183; *Drede atte dore stode* II, 205; *þei stonden forth* II, 71.

The Vowel of the Present is *e* in:

2) *I swere* V, 228; *þei swore* Pret. II, 168; *sworen* Past Part. V, 376.

3) The verb: *wax* Inf. IV, 174 forms its Preterite in *e*: *Also wroth as þe wynde wex Mede in a while* III, 328.

The C-Text has *e* in the Pres. Plural in:

*kynde fygis wexe* III, 29 and *o* in the Past Part. *woxen* IV, 212.

4) *drawe* Inf. V, 44; *he drowgh* Pret. V, 356; C — *he drow* VII, 407; *Ich drow* VII, 215.

5) *I waked* Pret. V, 3; Weak form from: *waken*;

We find the Strong Preterite in: *I awoke* VII, 139.

IV. Verbs, which have the Gothic Modification: *ei* Pres.; *ái* Pret. Sg.; *i* Pret. Pl.; *i* Past Part.; change the *ei* of the Present into *i*, and lengthen the Gothic *ái*

to *á* in the Preterite Singular. In *Piers the Plowman* we meet with the same Inflection, except the Preterite Singular, which shows *ó* instead of the A.-S. *á*:

1) *to dryve* V, 123; *I drowe* V, 209; *dryven* Past Part. V, 622.

2) *to ride* IV, 32, 190; *resoun rode faste* IV, 42; C: *reson rod forth* V, 40;

Anomalous: *resoun with hym ritte*, Pret. IV, 24; *pei riden fast* IV, 29; *ride* Past Part. C VI, 158.

3) *to shryve* pr. 64; *And (she) shrove hire* III, 44; *yshryve* V, 91; *shryven* V, 309 Past Part.

4) *to rise* VII, 187; *arise* V, 342; *pei risen* pr. 44; *I roos* V, 234; *he arose* V, 336; *Two risen up* Pret. V, 333.

5) *to chide* III, 177; *pei chiden* I, 191.

V. Verbs, which have the Gothic Modification: *iu* Pres.; *áu* Pret. Sg.; *u* Pret. Pl.; *u* Past Part.; change it in Anglo-Saxon into: *eo*, *ú* in the Present; *eá* in the Preterite Singular and *o* in the Past Participle. In our Poem the Anglo-Saxon *eo* of the Present is changed into *ee* or *i*; instead of *eá* in the Preterite Singular, we have *e*, *ei*.

The Plural as well as the Past Participle show *o*.

1) *to leese* III, 135. V, 95; *þe sonne for sorwe þer-of les* (Pret.) *syzte for a tyme* V, 499.

C has: *lees* VIII, 132.

Weak form: *lost* Past Part. V, 99; C — *ylost* III, 104; Strong: *ylore* I, 112.

2) *to flee* II, 209; C — *fle* IV, 176; *Falsenesse flei3 to þe freres* II, 210; C — *flegþ* III, 220; Weak form: *Alle fledden for fere* II, 233; Strong form: *and flowen in-to bernis* II, 233.

3) *þow lixe* Pres. V, 163; *or ellis þe bible lieth* Pres. VI, 233; *lowen* Past Part. B. V, 95; C. III, 20.

4) *Somme chosen chaffare* pr. 31. Pret. Pl.; *ychose* Past Part. V, 331.

5) *þow3 we crope under benches* (Pret. Subj.) pr. 186



## WEAK CONJUGATION.

The weak Conjugation forms its Past Tenses not by Change of Vowel, but by a Combination with the Auxiliary-Verb *do* (Gothic *da*) in the abbreviation of *de* by means of a Uniting-Vowel. In Anglo-Saxon there were two: *i* and *o*; *i* (*y*) existed much longer in its pure sound than *o*, which soon became replaced by *e*. In time the “flat *e*” was also substituted for *i*. The only relic of this Uniting-Vowel in Modern-English is the *e* of the termination *ed* of Weak Verbs. At Langland’s time, however, the Uniting-Vowel kept its place not only in the Past Tenses and in some Infinitives (as in Anglo-Saxon), but it was even inserted superfluously in Present Tenses. — We will give a few Infinitives, in which the Uniting-Vowel is retained:

Text B: *tulyen* VII, 2; *tilie* pr. 120; *tilye* VI, 238; *wonye* VII, 55; *shonye* pr. 144; *erie* VI, 67; *eryen* VII, 5; *cracchy* pr. 186; besides: *cracche* pr. 154.

Text C has amongst others: *folwy* VII, 127; *savy* II, 80; *carien* I, 31; *erye* IX, 66; besides: *eren* IX, 2.

The Uniting-Vowel has been inserted in the following Present Tenses:

*þerinne wonieth a wizte* I, 63; *Til lordes and ladies lovien alle treuthe* IV, 114; *þat þow hatie* VI, 52; *Ac many tyme I shonye* V, 169.

Examples from Text C: *The while 3e lovyep þuse lordes* IV, 57; *3e lackieþ* IV, 58.

The *Preterite* is formed regularly by adding *de* to the Root of the Verb (amixed to it by means of the “flat Uniting-Vowel *e*”. The terminations are then: — *ede*, — *edest*, — *ede*, in the Singular, and — *eden* in the Plural. As in Anglo-Saxon, the syncope of the uniting *e* takes place particularly after a long vowel in the Stem of the Verb preceding, in which case the terminations are: — *de* etc.

So we have:

*Drede atte dore stode and þe dome herde* (A.-S. *hýrde*)  
II, 205.

*þow feddest* (A.-S. *fēðdest*) *with þi fresche blode* V, 501.

*I ladde* (A.-S. *læd-de*) *golde to Rome* V, 251.

An irregular formation is:

*And demed* (A.-S. *dēm-de*) *þat dowel . . .* VII, 169.

In the C-Text we read:

*kny3thod hym ladde* I, 139.

The regular full terminations are found in:

*askede* II, 46; *lenede* I, 8; *lyvede* I, 17; *serveden* pr. 211; *plededen* pr. 212; *fayteden* pr. 42; *lyveden* I, 28; *likeden* I, 70; *kneleden* I, 71.

Very often, however, Langland omitted the final *e*, *en* entirely and formed his Preterites in the same manner as we now do:

*I slombred* pr. 10; *it sweyved so merye* pr. 10; *Lewed men leved hym wel and lyked his wordes* pr. 72.

In the C Text we meet with a few stray instances of the peculiar termination — *id* (*yd*):

*callid* I, 132; *knelyd* IV, 45.

The Prefix *y* is found very rarely before Preterites:  
*yrifled* V, 234; *yspilte* V, 380.

The *Past Participle* is formed by adding the termination *ed* to the Root. (C often adds *id*.) For the Prefix *y* see Participles II.

Observations.

*d* changes into *t* in the formation of the Past Tenses

I. with Verbs, the Stem of which ends in *nd* or *rd*.

In this case the *d*, belonging to the Verb, is dropped:

1) *send* Inf. VII, 36; *sent* Pret. I, 180; *sent* Past Part. V, 492.

2) *wende* Inf. VI, 60; *went* Pret. pr. 4; *went* Past Part. VI, 207.

3) *blente* Pret. C VIII, 135; *blent* Past Part. B V, 502.  
(from *blenden* — to blind.)

4) *girt* Pret. V, 379 (from *girden* — to cast).

5) *forbrenne* Inf. C IV, 125; *ybrent* Past Part. IV, 105; but exceptionally: *forbrende* Pret. IV, 107.

Another anomalous form from the B Text:

*þat myzte be spared and spended on somme hungrie* V, 380.

II. with Verbs, the Stem of which ends in *p* or *t*:

1) *I kepe* III, 278; *þow keptest* VII, 189.

2) *þat þei a lede mette* V, 522; *3if þei mette eft-*  
*sone* VI 172.

Anomalous:

*worshupde* IV, 13 in the C Text.

The inflectional *d* is omitted after *st* or *tt*:

*Clement þe bobelere cast of his cloke* V, 327; *To wayne up þe wicket þat þe wommann shette* V, 611. — C has *shutten* III, 223.

Verbs of the "Mixed Conjugation" which in their Past Tenses show modification as well as the Weak termination (Germ. Rückumlaut) and thus are analogous to the Anglo-Saxon, are:

1) *telle* Inf. III, 103; *She tolde hym* III, 45.

2) *selle* Inf. V, 219; C *sulle* X, 55; *he solde* V, 131; *sold* Past Part. C IV, 246.

3) *techen* Inf. V, 12; *tauhte* I, 76.

4) *seche* Inf. III, 344; *seke* V, 519; *he souhte* IV, 63; *ysouht* Past Part. pr. 50.

5) *cacche* Inf. V, 259; *cauhte* V, 358.

6) *fihte* Inf. VI, 36; *þei fouhten* pr. 42; *yfouhte* VI, 154.

A small number of Weak Verbs had already in Anglo-Saxon a peculiar (Inflection comp. Koch, hist. Gr. I, 320) and preserved this particularity still in our Poem:

*clothen* Inf. (A.-S. *claðjan*) pr. 62; *þei clotheden hem* (A.-S. *claðoden*) pr. 56. — The contracted form *cladde* does not occur.

2) *maken* Inf. (A.-S. *macjan*) VI, 287; *he made* (A.-S.

*macode*) V, 403; *ymaked* Past. Part.. pr. 14; *ymade* II, 43 (A.-S. *macod*).

3) *have* Inf. (A.-S. *habban*) III, 338; *han* pr. 109; *he hadde* (A.-S. *hæf-e-de*) III, 284; *he haved* III, 39; *þei haved* II, 166; *þei had* pr. 50; *had* Past Part. (A.-S. *hæfed*) V, 165.

4) *libbe* Inf. (A.-S. *libban*) III, 226; shows regular forms.

5) *sey* Inf. (A.-S. *secjan*) pr. 52; *segge* V, 617; *he seide* Pret. (A.-S. *sæde*) pr. 70.

6) *he leyth* Pres. (from *lecjan*) V, 355; *he leyde* Pret. (A.-S. *leyede, lêde*) V, 359.

7) *bringen* Inf. (A.-S. *bringan*) III, 151; *he brouzte* Pret. (A.-S. *brohte*) pr. 69; C *broght* I, 97.

8) *bigge* Inf. VI, 682; *bugge* (A.-S. *bycgan*) pr. 168. *abie* III, 249; *I bouzte* (A.-S. *bohte*) V, 219; *ybouzt* Past. Part. (A.-S. *boht*) pr. 176.

9) *þynke* Inf. (A.-S. *þencean*) VII, 167.

10) *me thynketh* (A.-S. *þyncð*) pr. 165; *me thouzte* (A.-S. *þuhte*) pr. 8.

11) *worche* Inf. (A.-S. *vyrcan*) I, 26; *he wrouzte* (*vorhte*) I, 167; *3e wrouzte* I, 13; C II, 13.

12) *don* Inf. (A.-S. *don*) III, 315; *done* IV, 27; *do* III, 60; *he dede* (A.-S. *dide*) III, 140; *did* V, 245.

The C Text has: *he dude* I, 123; *dud* III, 221; *þey dude* IV, 322; *don* Past Part. (*gedôn*) pr. 98; *do* V, 418; C *ydo* III, 128; *idon* VII, 109.

## ANOMALOUS VERBS.

1. The Verb-Substantive — *be* Inf. (A.-S. *beon*) pr. 79. — The Present Indicative Singular:

*am* I, 75; *art* VII, 131; *is* V, 558. — Plural: *beth* III, 27; *ben* VI, 132; *ben* V, 170. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Pers. Plur. shows a greater variety in its forms; we find besides: *arn* pr. 18; *aren* III, 80, pr. 164; *beth* VII, 66; *are* VI, 210.

The C Text has even: *buþ* IX, 17.

The origin of these double forms lies in the double forms for the Present in Anglo-Saxon; *beth*, *ben* express rather the idea of futurity.

The Subjunctive is always: *be* IV, 189. VI, 207 etc.

The Imperative Singular is: *be* 2<sup>nd</sup> Pers. V, 511.

The Plural shows: *be* or *beth* (C *beeth* II, 173), the former of them is generally followed by the Personal Pronoun: *be we* pr. 188; *be 3e* VII, 183; *beth I*, 174. II, 137.

In the Preterite Sing. Indic. we have:

*I was* pr. 7; *þow were* V, 272; *she was* II, 236.

Plural: *were* pr. 55. Subjunctive: *were* pr. 2, pr. 68, pr. 84 etc.

The Past Participle is: *ben* V, 168 etc.; twice only we find in the B Text the irregular form *be*: *Amonges Burgeyses have I be* V, 129. *I have be cook in hir kichyne* V, 155. Text C has: *ybe* VII, 16; *yben* VIII, 188.

The Negative *ne* in prefixed to some forms of *to be* and appears thus in the following contractions:

*nam* (for: *ne am*) V, 420; *nys* (for: *ne is*) V, 455; *nere* (for: *ne were*) III, 134.

2. *worthe* (A.-S. *veorðan*) pr. 187 (Germ. werden) — used in the meaning of *to be*, *to become*. Other forms are: *yworth* VI, 84; *yworthe* VI, 228; remarkable as Infinitives with the Prefix *y*. — Besides we find: *worth* 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg. Pres. I, 186. III, 33 etc.; *worth* 2<sup>nd</sup> Sg. Pres. I, 26.

This verb occurs only in those few instances; rare in Langland's time, it has become entirely obsolete in our day.

3. *wil* (A.-S. *villan*). In the Present Indic. we meet with the forms: *wil* III, 8; *wilt* VI, 229; *wolt* II, 44; *wil* V, 40, *wol* V, 250 in the Singular. The C Text shows a preference for the forms with *o*:

*wolt þow* IV, 147; *he wol* III, 247. (The *o* was very likely adopted from the Preterite.)

The Plural is: *we wil* III, 17; *3e wil* V, 54; *þei wil*

VI, 207. The C Text gives again forms with *o*: *wolle* IV, 18; *wollen* I, 36; III, 184.

In the Preterite we have: *wolde* III, 51; *woldest*, *wolde* VI, 251; in the Singular, and: *wolde*, *wolden* pr. 197. I, 100; in the Plural.

Combinations with the Negative *ne* (such as in *to be*) appear in the Present and Preterite. Thus:

*nelle* pr. 109; *nel* pr. 38 (for: *I ne wil*); *neltow* VI, 158 (for: *þow ne wilt*); *nalde* V, 566. V, 439 (for: *I ne wolde*); *nalde* VI, 238 (for: *he ne wolde*).

### PRETERITE PRESENTS.

The following Vsrbs, the Presents of which are in "form" Strong Preterites of a presumably original, but obsolete Verb, form their Preterites according to the system of the Weak Conjugation.

1. *can* (A.-S. *can*) The forms of the Pres. Ind. are: *can* III, 3; *canst* II, 46; *can* pr. 199; in the Singular, and *can* V, 168; *konne* I, 194; *conneth* pr. 33; in the Plural. The Subjunctive is *kunne* VI, 255.

The Preterite appears still without the inorganic *l*, which, though not pronounced, has been inserted in Modern-English. The Singular is: *couthe* V, 79; *eouth* V, 181; *coudest* V, 540; *couthe* I, 115.

The Plural: *couthe* pr. 200; *coude* pr. 129.

The Present Participle: *konnyng* III, 34 [C *unconnyng* IV, 244 (stupid, foolish)] has lost already its original signification and is used as our Modern *cunning*.

2. *dar* (A.-S. *dear*) the Present is: *dar* 1<sup>st</sup> Sg. VI, 270; *dar* 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg. pr. 152. The Preterite *durst* III, 201; in the first, and *dorst* pr. 178; *durst* II, 234; in the third Person, C — *durste* I, 193.

3. *shal* (A.-S. *sceal*). The Sg. Pres. is: *shal* I, 2; *shalt* I, 34; *shal* VI, 324; the Plural: *shul* III, 34; *shulle* I, 126; *shullen* I, 176; *shal* VI, 152.

In Text C we find: *we shulleþ* IV, 53; *þei shulleþ* IV, 36.

The Preterite shows *u* (*o*). Sing.: *shulde* VII, 120; *sholdest* I, 42; *shulde* VI, 116; Plural: *shulde* VII, 125; *sholde* pr. 37; *shulden* VII, 13. The Subjunctive is: *shulde* VI, 49 etc.

4. *may* (A.-S. *mæg*) has in the Present:

*may* I, 207 1<sup>st</sup> Sg.; pr. 192 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg.; in the Plural: *mo-wen* pr. 172; *mowe* VI, 40; C — *þei mow* IV, 275. The Modern form: *we may* VI, 130; is yet very rare.

The Preterite gives: *mizte* in all Persons. I, 82; III, 28; pr. 157; pr. 166 etc. — except in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pers. Sing. which shows the termination — *est*: *myztest* pr. 214.

5. *mot* (A.-S. *môt*) *mot* II, 115 2<sup>nd</sup> Sg. Pres.

The Plural is: *mot* VI, 291; *mote* V, 570.

In the Preterite an *s* is inserted, as in Anglo-Saxon: *most*, *moste* VII, 106. V, 151.

The Subjunctive is the same:

*moste* V, 100. IV, 112.

6. *owe* (A.-S. *âh*) appears in the 1<sup>st</sup> Pers. Sing. in: *with crafte þat I owe* V, 476. In the Preterite we find:

*auzte* 1<sup>st</sup> Sg. II, 28; *ouztest* 2. Sg. I, 75. — *ouzte* 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg. III, 68. The C Text has: *oghtest* 2<sup>nd</sup> Sg. II, 72 *ouhte* 3<sup>rd</sup> Sg. IV, 72.

7. *wot* (A.-S. *vât*) occurs very often in our Poem. The Present Singular shows the forms: *wote* V, 180; *wot* V, 651; *wost* III, 179; *wote* II, 77.

The Plural has *i* as in Anglo-Saxon:

*witen* II, 128; *wyten* III, 175; besides *wote* III, 329. The Subjunctive shows: *wite* V, 297. V, 606 etc.

The Preterite is found in: *wist* pr. 12; *wyst* VII, 71. The Infinitive appears in: *wite* II, 44; *witen* VI, 213 (A.-S. *vitan*). The Imperative occurs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pers. Plural in: *Witeth and witnesseth þat womieth upon þis eathe, þat Mede is y-maried* II, 74.

## Lebenslauf.

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Emil Alexander Wilhelm Bernard, geboren zu Posen den 21. October 1850, Sohn von Alexander Bernard, Kaufmann in Aachen, und Ida, geb. von Fritschen; evang. Confession. In meinem 10. Lebensjahre entriss der Tod mir meine geliebte Mutter; die liebevolle Fürsorge meiner zweiten Mutter Emma, geb. Edel, machte mir jedoch diesen herben Verlust weniger hart empfindlich.

Während der Jahre 1858—1862 besuchte ich eine Privatschule, und darauf die Realschule I. Ord. zu Elberfeld. Letztere Anstalt verliess ich im Jahre 1869, nach bestandnem Maturitätsexamen. Sodann trat ich als Einjährig-Freiwilliger bei dem westf. Ulanen-Regiment No. 5 in Düsseldorf ein, nahm Theil an dem Feldzuge gegen Frankreich, und bezog, mit dem Qualifications-Atteste zum Reserve-Cavallerie-Officier entlassen, im Herbste 1871 die hiesige Hochschule, an der ich mich während 6 Semester dem Studium der neueren Sprachen, der Philosophie und Geschichte gewidmet.

Während meiner Studienzeit hörte ich Vorlesungen namentlich bei den Herren Professoren und Docenten: Andresen, Bergk, Birlinger, Bischoff, Delius, Diez, Knoodt, J. B. Meyer, Philippon, Ritter, Simrock, v. Sybel. Seit dem Wintersemester 1872/73 besuchte ich das Seminar für neue Sprachen unter Leitung des Herrn Prof. Bischoff.

Allen meinen Herren Lehrern spreche ich hiermit meinen aufrichtigsten Dank aus!

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## **T h e s e n.**

1. Das englische Mystery ist originell und nicht erst durch französischen Einfluss entstanden.

2. Boileau's Kritik Tasso's (Art Poét. Chant III) liess sich bei dem damaligen Zustande der französischen Litteratur rechtfertigen.

3. Die Erscheinung Jupiter's in Shakspeare's Cymbeline (Act V, Sc. 4) ist Shakspeare nicht abzusprechen.

4. In Boileau's Art Poétique liest man:

„Dans ce sac ridicule, où Scapin s'enveloppe

Je ne reconnais plus l'auteur du Misanthrope.“

dafür ist: "l'enveloppe" zu lesen.

5. Pageant, bezeichnend eine Art Mystery, ist abzuleiten vom lat. 'pagina' (Rolle, Folioblatt) und nicht von 'pegma' (Gerüst).

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